

E 2086

This Book is Dedicated to my respected
Brother-in-Faith Nawab Mir Mohammad
Kamaluddin Husain Khan—Nawab Kamal
Yar Jung Bahadur—of Hyderabad (Deccan)
for his profound love for Imam Husain
and Great Services to Islām.

(Dr.) Mohammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin,

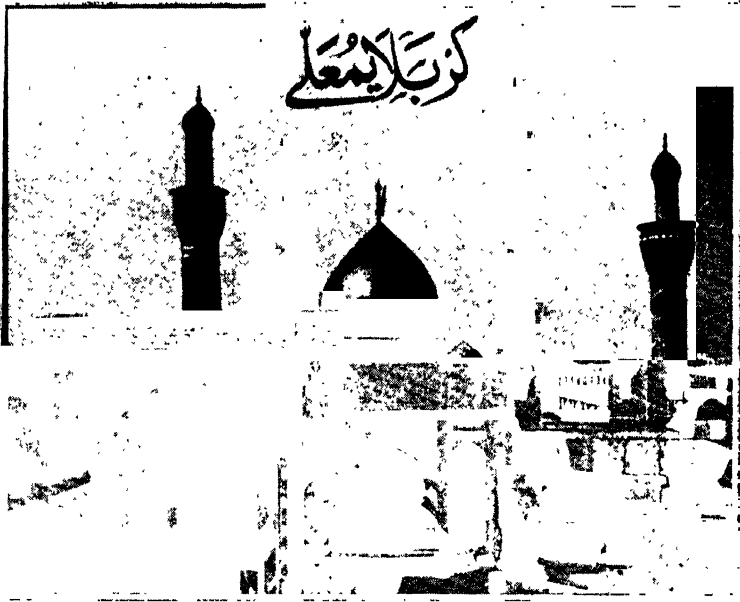
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1356 A. H.

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1937 A. H.

72, Bhajipala Street, Bombay, 3.
(India).



The general view of the Sacred Tomb of Imam Husain (عليه السلام) at Karbala where lacs of devoted followers of the Imam ever visit it. (Allah's choicest blessings ever be on him.)

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF HUSAIN'S MARTYRDOM.

BY

MOHAMMAD ALI AL-HAJ SALMIN.

B. LITT., H.M.D., M.S.P. (LONDON).

(1937.)

THE HOLY QUR'AN SAYS:

"O you who believe ! If you help (the cause of) Allah, He will help you and make firm your feet." (47 : 7).

* * * * *

"And (as for) those who are slain in the way of Allah, He will by no means allow their deeds to perish. He will guide them and improve their condition. And cause them to enter the Heaven which He has made known to them." (47 : 4-6).

* * * * *

"And reckon not those who are slain in Allah's way as dead, nay, (they are) alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord." (3 : 168).

* * * * *

"Sure Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property for this, that they shall have the Heaven ; they fight in Allah's Way, so that they slay and are slain, a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Quran, and who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah"? (9 : 111).

* * * * *

The Holy Prophet Mohammad (Allah's blessings be on him and his descendants) said : "I am leaving amongst you two heavy things, the one is the Book of Allah (Quran) and other is my progeny." (Musnad Humbal Vol. 3, Page 14) (Fakhruddin Razi Vol. 4, Page 128 of his Tafseer and Durre Mansoor Vol. II, Page 13).

* * * * *

Tirmizi relates through Anas : "The Prophet was asked as to who was the most beloved of his house and the Prophet replied : "Hasan and Husain."

PREFACE.

In my book, "Husain: the Greatest World Martyr," I have attempted only an outline sketch of that great personality's life, leading up to his unique sacrifice to save Islam for humanity. His life's message decrees a fuller and deeper treatment. This present work is a humble endeavour of mine in that direction.

Husain's martyrdom stands alone in its unapproached and unapproachable grandeur. History has not recorded another incident that can stand even a tolerable comparison to it. Says Gibbon, the famous historian: "In a distant age and climate, the tragic scene of the death of Husain will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader." Verily, Husain appeals to humanity at large, irrespective of caste, creed and colour. From Karbala has gone forth the immortal Voice, the Voice of Truth and Unity, unto the distant corners of the world. It will ring and ring through ages.

I place my tiny thing before the public. If it has done its bit to broadcast the Martyr's mighty message, that is ample compensation and consolation for all my troubles.

72, Bhajipala Street, }
Bombay, 3. (India). }

The Author.

1356. A. H. }
1937. A. D. }

To

**The Sacred Soul of The Greatest Martyr
of the World—Imam Husain—the grand-
son of the Holy Prophet Mohammad.**

(الحمد لله الذى هدانا لهذا وما كنا لنهتدي لولا أن هدانا الله)

حيات سيدنا الامام حسين ابن علي

عليهما السلام

-أو-

واقعه كربلا (بالانجليزى)

سلسلة حوادث تاريخية حول فاجعة

الامام سيدنا الحسين ابن علي

عليهما السلام مأخوذة من اوثق

المصادر وبطرز اخلاقى جديد

يحتل ويملل الوقايح على

اسلوب فلسفى فريد

فى بابه

تأليف خادم العلم والدين

محمد علي الحاج سالمين

١٣٥٦ هـ

١٩٣٧ م



سبحانك يا من نحيرت في اشعة جماله اوهام المتوهمين - و تقاصرت عن ادراك
 كنهه كاله افكار المتفكرين - نحمدك حمداً حامدين و نشرك شكر الشاكرين
 و نؤمن بك ايمان المخلصين - و نصلى ونسلم على نبيك محمد سيد الاولين
 والآخرين - والمبعوث رحمة للعالمين و على اهل بيته ائمة الهدى ومصابيح
 الدجى واعلام التنقي وكهف الوردى لاسبغ على سيد المظلومين و سيد المهمومين
 وسيد المذبحين - وسيد المقتولين سيدنا ومولانا وامامنا ابي عبدالله الحسين عليه
 وعلى ابيه وجده افضل الصلوة والسلام - روى و ارواح المؤمنين له الفدا -
 محمد على الحاج سالمين

١٣٥٦ هـ ١٩٣٧ م

قال الله تبارك و تعالى :-

« يا ايها الذين آمنوا ان تنصروا الله ينصركم وثبت اقدامكم »

(القرآن المجيد) ٤٧ - ٧

« والذين قتلوا في سبيل الله فلن يضل اعمالهم »

(القرآن المجيد) ٤٧ - ٤

« سيديهم و يصالح بالهم و يدخلهم الجنة عرفها لهم »

(القرآن المجيد ٤٧ : ٥ - ٦)

« ولا تحسبن الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله امواتاً بل احياء عند ربهم يرزقون »

(القرآن المجيد ٣ - ١٦٨)

« ان الله اشترى من المؤمنين انفسهم و اموالهم بأن لهم الجنة يقاتلون

في سبيل الله فيقتلون و يقتلون وعداً عليه حقا في التورات و الانجيل

و القرآن و من اوفى بعهده من الله فاستبشروا ببيعكم الذى بايعتم به و ذلك

هو الفوز العظيم »

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله و صحبه وسلم : « افي تارك فيكم الثقلين

كتاب الله و عترتي اهلبيتي » (مسند امام احمد حنبل جلد ٣ صفحة ١٤)

و تفسير كبير لخير الدين رازي جلد ٤ صفحة ١٢٨

و تفسير در منشور جلد ٢ صفحة ١٣ سطر ٢ جلال الدين سيوطي

« و اخرج الترمذي عن انس انه صلى الله عليه وسلم سئل اى اهل بيتك

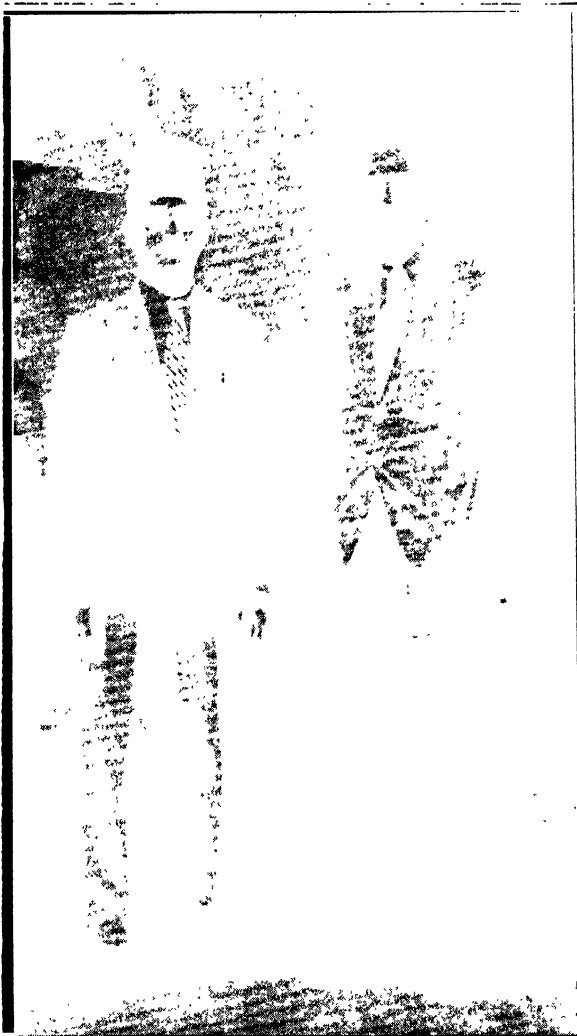
احب اليك فقال الحسن و الحسين » (عليهما السلام)

HUSAIN.

By Husain Wells, Singapore.

Pitched upon the scorching desert
the tents of Hussain lay.
Encompassed round with Satan's hounds,
Upon that Black Sad Day.
They numbered less than Eighty Strong,
Women and Children too.
Whilst Yazid's thousands stood around,
Awaiting the Fiend's cue.
Driven away from the cooling stream,
His children waiting for water,
Awaiting with Patience extremely sublime,
Like sheep for the butcher's slaughter.
Oh ! how valiantly fought that pītiful few,
Against Yazid's vile murderers
Fought with a courage unequalled in Time,
Fought with a fierceness that was surely divine.
The earth quaked and trembled as noon drew near,
But still the survivors knew no fear.
But fewer and fewer grew that pitiful band,
For Islam, and God, and Husain, they stand.
At last, all were dead, the Devil had won.
Blood red sank down the merciless sun.
Trampled and torn lay the gallant Husain,
For Islam, and God, the Faithful were slain.

"East Meets West in the Service of Islam."



**(Left) Dr. Muhammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin (The Author).
(Right) Dr. Khalid Sheldrake President : The Western
Islamic Association (London).**

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CHAPTER I.

Introduction.

The Holy Prophet, Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be ever upon him) having performed successfully his last pilgrimage to Mecca, and having pointed out, to those huge number of pilgrims gathered there, the fundamental principles and practices of Islam, said to them, among other things, that he was leaving behind for them two things, namely, the Book of God and the Ahlul-Bait, his house people or his descendants. He further added thus : " If you follow these, (the Book of God and the Ahlul-Bait) you will never go astray from the right path."

But the people did go astray, and they did not care a bit for the Book of God. The untold sufferings of the purest souls, the Prophet's people, reached the most pathetic climax in the matchless and marvellous martyrdom of Husain, the beloved grandson of the Prophet, with all those dearest and nearest to him. To understand aright the full purport and the deep philosophy underlying this unique martyrdom in the world of religion, it is quite essential, at the very outset, to present to the readers a succinct account of the Prophet's life and work, followed by a similar biographical sketch regarding this great martyr. May Allah show us the right path and the right interpretation !

CHAPTER II.

The Prophet and Islam.

The main current of our narration does not permit us to deal in detail about the romantic life and achievements of the great Prophet of Arabia, the greatest Prophet in world's history. But to understand the unparalleled tragic incident that took place at Karbala, to view it in its fullest and clearest aspect, it is quite essential to paint its background. That is, what was Arabia before the advent of the Holy Prophet, and how his magic touch metamorphosed the whole place. And even his gigantic efforts were, after his death, threatened with complete annihilation, the inevitable result being the martyrdom of Husain with his whole family. But for Husain's martyrdom, Islam, founded and established by his grandfather, would have been wiped off long ago.

The people of Arabia, before the advent of the Holy Prophet, were mentally and morally as barren as the soil there. Debauchery of the worst type (to keep another man's wife was considered by them as a common and innocent vice), undiluted and wholesale drunkenness, infanticide, frequent feuds and wars - these were the order of the day. And they worshipped all sorts of stone images, and the Kaba contained nearly four hundred idols.

The great Prophet was born amidst such a sickening and sinking atmosphere. But like the lotus amidst mud, he grew up to boyhood and youth with an unsullied character. Nothing could tempt him towards the baser life. He was much grieved to see the sad state of affairs around him, spending most of his time in deep meditation, and thinking about the ways and means to save those countless soulless souls. His unsullied character and his high integrity attracted the attention of a rich and noble lady, Khadija by name. Though she was forty and though he was only twenty-five, she married him. This was a great turning-point in his life.

After this marriage, Muhammad spent most of his time in a lonely cave, called Hira, meditating and meditating, until at last the light dawned upon him. The divine Command came to him to spread the worship of the One God, to spread the creed of Islam. His noble wife was his first disciple.

Pages after pages are needed to narrate about the inconceivably inhuman tortures underwent by the first few dauntless followers of the Prophet, who were all ordinary people, slaves and others. Islam was built upon such splendid sacrifices. The situation grew hotter every day. The followers had to emigrate to Abyssinia and other places. At last, the Prophet himself, to save Islam, had to flee from Mecca to Medina. In Medina, severer struggles and trials awaited him. The Meccans did not leave him alone and safe even there. He had to defend Islam by wars. Many wars took place at Badr, Uhud etc. The worst of it was that the Jews in Medina, quite contrary to their solemn pledge to stand by him, secretly helped the Meccans. But the Prophet and the peerless soldiers of Islam, few in number, came out with flying colours in all the wars fighting as they did against overwhelming numbers. At last, Mecca was subdued without shedding a drop of blood. The Prophet, who was once forced to flee for his life from the city of his birth, entered it triumphantly. Men and women now rushed forward to the Prophet to embrace his faith. What cannot be done with endurance and will power? From the very beginning he had that unflinching faith in his mission, and finally his great mission was thus crowned with a success so grand and complete. The whole of Arabia was now at the feet of the Prophet, and Islam's mission spread beyond Arabia's borders to distant places. The great Prophet breathed his last having seen with his own eyes how his untiring efforts were ultimately crowned with that merited success.

Purity, integrity, dignity, and solemnity marked his youth. Robust optimism and undaunted faith in his mission carried him from one success to another, never caring for failures, trials, and wars. To read the life and career of his great personality is to know and understand what amount of tremendous moral strength lay behind him. Anybody else in his place would have never achieved even a bit of his glorious achievement. He was perfect and was an ideal in all aspects of life—Prophet, Commander, King, Reformer, Law-giver, Householder, etc. Hence, he was able to give to the world a perfect book of religion, the Koran. As revealed by God, he became the world teacher, this fact showing clearly the true divinity of the Koran. In this great Book is reflected the far-seeing nature of the Holy Prophet—those political, social, and moral laws, truly practical and highly ideal. Islam established the worship of the One God, recognised the brotherhood and equality of man-kind, and abolished slavery, debauchery, drunkenness, gambling, and other social evils. The magic touch of a matchless personality brought round a hopeless set of people to the worship of the One God.

CHAPTER III

HUSAIN, THE MOST BELOVED OF THE PROPHET.

Husain, the central figure in our treatise, the hero of Karbala, the beloved, grandson of the Holy Prophet and the precious offspring of Fatima (the virtuous and beloved daughter of the Prophet) and Ali, was born on the 5th of Shaaban, the eighth Arabic month, of the 4th year Hijra. He was younger than his elder brother Hasan, by only a year and a few days. At his birth, the Prophet said the prayers unto his tiny ears, and on the 7th day took place the most celebrated ceremony of shaving the sacred child's head. It is related that Imam Hasan

resembled the Prophet from head to breast, and Imam Husain resembled from breast to toe. Husain's only diet in his infancy was his mother's milk. He used to suck the Prophet's tongue or thumb.

Boundless and touching was the Prophet's love for his grandchildren, Hasan and Husain. Standing over the pulpit of his mosque, the Prophet was one day delivering his Friday sermon. As the sermon was going on, the two grandchildren, Hasan and Husain, came in red clothes. The tender ones were not able to ascend the steps which led to the mosque proper, and it was feared that they would fall down. Noticing their difficulty, the Prophet at once descended from the pulpit and carried them up himself. Having seated them beside him, he expressed thus: "Verily, what Allah says is true, that our children and our belongings are a great test for us. When I saw my children on the verge of falling over the ground, I grew at once impatient until I suspended my preachings and carried them hither." See how his affection for his grandchildren reached a supreme sublimity and divinity, even solemn spiritual affairs giving way to it.

Anas, a companion of the Prophet says that once somebody asked the Prophet as to who was the most beloved of him among his family and children. The ready reply was that he loved Hasan and Husain most. The Prophet sometime would ask Fatima to bring "his sons," and when the two children were brought to him, he would smell and kiss their lips, and hug them to his breast with great love. It is reported to have been said by the Prophet that his body was a garden, and that Hasan and Husain were two flowers in it.

One day the two children came running to their grandfather and with the one in his lap and the other under his armpit he spoke: I love them, O God and wish Thy love for them and for those who love them."

On another occasion, the Prophet of God had seated Husain on his right thigh, and Abraham, his own son, on the left, when Gabriel appearing before the Prophet stated that Allah would not keep the two together, and that one of the two He will soon reclaim. So, the Prophet was given the choice of having either of the two. And strange enough, soon after the Prophet's choice for Husain, Abraham passed away, and the Prophet used to say that Husain was the treasure left at the cost of his own dear son.

It is said that one day the Prophet went from the house of Ayesha, his wife, to the house of Fatima, his most beloved daughter, and there he heard the tearful cries of Husain. On this, he said to Fatima in grief: "Do you know I feel much injured at the cries of Husain"?"

The Prophet has said: "God ! I love Husain. Thou shalt love him too."

These diverse instances are enough to point out what a beloved and precious product of Islam was sacrificed to uphold virtue and righteousness against the darkest and devilish forces. His peerless character and attainment about which we shall deal in detail in the next chapter, will further intensify and glorify his martyrdom, and the inevitable conclusion is, that Husain has rightly earned for himself and Islam an immortal fame and name.

We have seen how the Prophet was mentally tortured at the sight of the child, Husain, weeping, and how most tormented would his soul have felt at the merciless slaughter of his beloved grandson at Karbala. But who can avoid Divine dispensation, not even Husain, the flower of mankind? Allah's Will be done.

CHAPTER IV.

Husain's Character and Attainments.

Husain was not taught in any school, nor was he placed under any teacher. Any sort of regular teaching system was something absent in those days in Arabia and noble families like the Hashimites considered learning as something derogatory. The Prophet himself was unschooled and untaught, and he became the teacher for the whole humanity, the most ardent champion of learning and knowledge. Similar was the case with his Ah-Lul-Bait or progeny. And all these have left behind them for the world a marvel and a mine of treasure, as seen in their various speeches and writings. The truth is, that all these obtained, that way of knowledge direct from the Divine source.

So, culture and learning must have been something inherent in Husain, being the grandson of the Propet and the son of Ali. His childhood was spent in the company of his saintly grandfather, and his boyhood was replete with the wonderful trainings in various channels of angelic thoughts and heroic activities through his father, Ali. Ali's military skill was universally acknowledged, by friends and foes alike. It is believed that Hasan and Husain received their military training from such a father, the hero of many wars.

It is traditionally related that the Imam Husain was very eloquent. His speech was such that nobody would dare interfere and interrupt in the middle. Generally, sentences as the following were a line at the tip of his tongue: "O people ! strive to attain excellence and perfection, and be always ahead in accumulating such riches that Allah and your conscience allow. Make haste to get the aforesaid, for attainment of superiority and means for achievement of riches." Sometimes he would say that "beggars coming to us, due to their need, is one of the best blessings of God." He would point out that to "gratify the desire of the helpless is a virtue, and that whosoever adopted a generous habit is sure to be exalted in both the worlds. On the other hand, miserliness, he would add, can only bring down one to degradation."

Husain's intensity and depth of devotion to God was of such a nature that, in addition to his prayers or 'Namaz' (the prescribed form of Moslem prayers) to his beloved God, he offered one thousand 'Nafil' more (prayers in acknowledgement of God's kindness and love) in gratitude to His mercy and kindness. Once somebody happened to ask the son of Husain as to what the reason was for the fewness of the Imam's children. His intensely deep devotion to the Creator gave the Imam but very little time to be in the company of his wife whom he undoubtedly loved deeply ; but all worldly love and affairs had to give way to the supreme task of concentrated devotion and love to God. His twenty-five pilgrimages to Mecca on foot must show what an amount of self-denial was in him, a life ever restlessly and zealously devoted to the services of Allah.

All historians agree that Husain was singularly famous for his hospitality, kindness and generosity, taking care of the helpless and the oppressed, and giving alms to the needy and poor. He would support persons with food and clothes, and his money was freely and generously spent in the way of charity. Read the following instance :—

A man reduced to utter poverty came to Hasan's residence, and he sent to the generous Imam the following Arabic couplets, which when rendered in English, run thus :

"I am a helpless man with practically nothing left with me. Of course, my honour, my family pride, and my self-respect are still with me, which I have tried to save so far by every possible means. But finding so saintly and so divine a customer in you, I am anxious to sell the same to you.

The person waited a while, and having received no reply, then repeated his request by sending the following couplets:—

"If I go away from so generous a personality without my request fulfilled, and if the people ask me what the generous Husain gave me at my request, (for, to come to your threshold means to return with as much as one desires from you) what shall I tell them ? If I tell everyone that you gave me something, it will be a lie. And if I reveal the truth of having returned from you, receiving practically nothing, this revelation, I for me, never like."

The most generous Husain sent him at once ten thousand derhams, with the following quatrette in Arabic. Its translation runs thus:—

"O person ! thou hast made much haste. And owing to that haste, I am not able to oblige thee with much. If thou hadst given me a little more time, I would have perhaps been able to satisfy thy request. I know it is very little and I hope you will accept it, and think as if thou hadst never requested, and I had given thee nothing."

It is related by Hadhrat Anas that one day the most venerable Husain was presented with a bouquet of flowers by one of his mǎid slaves. He smelt it, and then and there released the slave from the fetters of slavery. Anas, being surprised, asked Husain as to why he set free such a beautiful slave for so insignificant a gift. This was the sublime reply: "O Anas ! do you not know what Allah says in his most sacred Book ?—"And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet it with a better (greeting) than it or return it; surely Allah takes account of all things." (Holy Quran, IV: 88). The only best present to her could be what I have done for the pleasure of God."

It will be rather out of our province to go citing instances after instances, proving the very many sublime qualities of this matchless personality. No wonder then that the Medinites, one and all, were keenly grieved at heart when he left Medina for Mecca, for, to them he was the Prophet, Ali, Hasan, all combined. And again, it is no wonder that he soon became in Mecca also the most towering personality, guiding people in the ways of good life. Islam was built, and brought up by the life-blood of many faithful martyrs. When it was threatened with complete annihilation, its regeneration required the martyrdom of such a peerless and pure soul like Husain. His influence and fame still rings throughout the Islamic world. He died to live for ever. His sublime qualities had at last their triumph. What an amount of faith and patience we see in him ! Verily, character is the crown and glory of life. Character and culture, greatness and goodness, these were put to the severest test. The highest cause, the cause of Allah, needed the services of such a person. Husain sacrificed his all, body, soul, kith and kin, to save Islam. Who else could stand the supreme ordeal. May his life and character guide us through all the darkness and doubts of life.

CHAPTER V.

After The Prophet's Demise.

We have seen how Islam was placed on a firm footing by the Holy Prophet, Muhammad. But the moment the good soul bade farewell to this world, the state

of affairs drifted from bad to worse, ending in the inevitable Karbala tragedy. Ali, who had married the Prophet's daughter, Fatima, had also his claim to succeed to the Prophet's place as Caliph. "Ali is the master and controller of the affairs of every one whose master and controller I am", so said the Prophet himself. But Ali and afterwards his sons, Hasan and Husain, did not get the chance. The good teachings of Islam were replaced by utter irreligiosity, and the untold sufferings and calamities of the Prophet's descendants reached its pathetic climax in the martyrdom of Husain.

While Ali was very busy with Prophet's obsequies, unmindful of everything else, Abu Bakr became the 1st Caliph of the Moslem since then. Islam's position then, which was already shaken, would be made only worse, if Ali had interfered in the affair with his undoubted and unquestioned claim. He thought it best to keep aloof. He himself explained about his position thus: "I perceived my own right, as ordained by God and His Prophet, had been usurped by those who could put forward no claim to it. My eyes were full of tears as if dust had fallen in them. I meditated if I should bear the calamity patiently or should unsheath my sword. If I followed the first plan, the world would think that I was frightened of the Caliph's man power. If I chose the second alternative, Islam, which had not yet taken root, would easily have been eradicated and the people would consider that Ali was inclined towards worldly pomp. In obedience to the Prophet's dying words, I had to resign myself to the Will of God and, as pigeons accompany each other, I joined them in their flight. I went up as they did, and came down along with them so that I might guide them to the proper roosting". In accordance with this noble view, Ali was ever ready to help Abu Bakr whenever he was consulted regarding important affairs of State, and it must be said to the credit of Abu Bakr that he did not fail to recognise the superiority and ability of Ali.

Old companion Abu Bakr's reign lasted for only two and a half years. Omar reigned for ten years. Though Ali was given a chance to succeed Omar, one of the conditions imposed upon him was that he should follow the footsteps of the first two Caliphs. He could not naturally consent to this condition. Osman, was then chosen for the place.

Osman ruled for about twelve years. People got disgusted with Osman's rule. The infuriated mob attacked his palace more than once, and on one occasion a sword from among the angry crowd fell on his head and he died.

Thus, the Caliphate fell vacant again. Chaotic condition prevailed everywhere in its worst aspect. None was now willing to take up the position of the Caliph. There was no other go except to request Ali to become the head of the Moslem world. Ali, at last, could not but consent to assume the responsible position of the Caliphate. Ali willingly and eagerly came forward to swear allegiance on this condition that he would not follow the first two Caliphs' examples but act according to Koran.

So began the strict and straightforward rule of Ali, and the Prophet's principles and Islamic religion were once again reinstated. When Ali took charge of the Bait-ul-Mal, the public Treasury, the first thing that he did was to distribute among a lakh of people the surplus amount of three lakhs that he found. This good action did not evidently please many who expected a good

share. Ali's strictness thus created dissatisfaction everywhere. His prediction that his strict rule would not be liked was but too true. He said: "Now like thirty camels you came to the clear fountain and wish to drink of it by force, but mind you will not bear my hard and fast government in accordance with Divine orders, as your minds have long been polluted with worldly desires."

Ali dismissed all the wicked governors, appointing instead God-fearing men. This only augmented the prevailing dis-content. Rebellions and conspiracies followed, and Ali had to fight against a well organised force of his enemies; even Ayesha, the Prophet's wife, openly assisting in the rebellions and wars. Ali's success did not improve the situation. It may be rather out of place here to deal in detail about the various doings of the followers of Islam. Ali, had to face in fight, Moawiah, the Omiade Governor, who somehow escaped his deposition. The latter managed to gain everything by trickery, bribery and what not, and Ali's men deserted him. To make a long story short, the rule of this good son of Islam came to an abrupt end. In the morning as he was just prostrating in the mosque for prayer, the poisoned sword of one Abdur Rahman ibn Muljim cut deep his head. The blow proved fatal.

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

We have noted how Ali had tried his level best to protect the cause of Islam, and we have also noted how the forces against him were too much, ready to thwart his attempt at every step. Ever since the prophet's demise, right and righteousness had to desperately struggle against overwhelming wicked might.

Hasan the son of Ali, succeeded to the Caliphate. But the then turbulent state of affairs was so uncongenial to Islamic principles of governance, as clearly testified to by Ali's strict rule, that Hasan rightly preferred to keep aloof, handing over the Caliphate to Moawiah under certain definite conditions. They were :—

- (1) That he (Moawiah) should act in accordance with the prescribed principles in the Holy Quran.
- (2) That he should not nominate anyone as his successor.
- (3) That all Muslims were to have peace, security and safety of life, and were to be allowed to settle anywhere in Syria, Iraq, Hedjaz, Yemen, etc., especially those friends and relation of Ali.

Thus began again the Omiade supremacy, with Moawiah as Caliph. It is needless to point out here how this Moawiah's signing the conditions, as drafted by Hasan, was but nominal. Though the good and innocent soul, Hasan thus tried to keep aloof from the wicked surroundings, even that way he was not left alone and safe. Soon, he was poisoned and killed by one of his wives, no doubt, instigated by Moawiah and his followers to carry out the treacherous deed. That many belonging to the Prophet's family were slaughtered in the most inhuman manner, is but another black chapter in this wicked Omiade's rule, casting to winds the solemn pledges and conditions. Says Husain, the brother of Hasan, in a letter thus :

"O Moawiah ! Are you not the murderer of Hajar bin Adi ? Did you not slaughter like sheep the most pious and God-fearing of men who looked down on

every innovation in religion as a heinous crime and who cared naught for the criticisms of the wrongful critics? You have killed a great number of those guiltless personages whom you had pledged to protect. Beware! You have broken your word by the sharp edge of your sword."

"You broke your solemn pledges, revolted against God, and slaughtered guiltless souls," so states Husain in another letter to Moawiah. The latter spared no pains to animate his son, Yezid, a hopeless rake and downright drunkard and of illegitimate birth as his successor. He used bribery, treachery, trickery, etc., for obtaining allegiance to his son as the next Caliph. Despite all his ungodly and unscrupulous devices, he was meeting with stubborn oppositions from Mecca and Medina. Having done his best for his son, he died and Yezid took his place. The Ahlul-Bait had already suffered much; and still worse and worst days were in store for them and Islam.

CHAPTER VI.

Yezid's Usurpation.

Having assumed the Caliph's position, the very first thing that Yezid did was to issue mandates to the governors of all provinces, demanding from them oath of allegiance to him. The governor of Medina, Vahid received a similar mandate in which he ordered to see that all important persons in Medina, including Hussain pledged their allegiance to the new Caliph, recognizing his suzerainty. Such of those who failed to take this pledge were to be beheaded forthwith without hesitation, and their heads were to be sent to the Court of the Caliph.

It goes without saying that Husain refused to pledge obedience, when Yezid's mandate was read out to him by the governor. Soon, his position was sure to become hot, and he might be beheaded at any moment. That won't do. That will be only strengthening the hands of the enemies of Islam who were bent upon now to root out Islam and the Ahlul-Bait at any cost. Yezid was the worst specimen of humanity, capable of assisting in the worst crimes. Ali, also suffered martyrdom. Hasan's timely seclusion and perfect non-interference availed him little, for martyrdom was forced upon him. Husain was not prepared for this sort of silent and secret martyrdom which could do no good for the cause of Islam. He must leave Medina for Mecca, a safer place, which was a refuge for all.

Standing before his grandfather's grave, with eyes filled with tears, he cried thus, explaining his delicate and dangerous position: "O Apostle of Allah! observe what thy son experiences at the hands of thy disciples. If I swear fealty to Yezid, an irreligious drunkard and debauchee, I lose my faith in God and hence become an infidel. If I refuse to do so, I have to lose my life. Guide me as to what I should do."

Many tried to dissuade Husain from his project. The pang of separation was too much for the Medinites, for, Husain was the most beloved of all. Heart-rending cries were heard from ladies who said: "This day we lose from our midst the Prophet, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain; for, in Husain were alive all the attributes and good qualities of the Prophet and the Ahlul-Bait." So, Husain had to tear away from Medina. Accompanied by his family, friends and relations, he at last reached Mecca safe, and took refuge in the Kaba, spending his time in prayers and meditations.

CHAPTER VII.

Husain at Mecca.

Such a worthy grandson of the Prophet, the best living exponent of the principles and practices of Islam, no wonder, exerted a great and healthy influence over the Meccans, undoing in his own, silent way the irreligious atmosphere created by the most irreligious ruler, Yezid. One who took pleasure in publicly denouncing and degrading the Koran and the Holy Prophet, would even go to the extent of treating slightly the very sanctity of the Kaba, venturing, in the height of his blind antagonism, to murder within its precincts the grandson of the Great Prophet. But Husain patiently awaited the development of events.

At this time, the Kufians wanted a spiritual leader, for, they had grown pretty disgusted with Yezid's irreligious ways. But they were a sort of people who could not be trusted so easily, so wavering and unprincipled they were, despite their solemn letters to Husain, requesting his guidance. At last, Husain found it difficult and even delicate to avoid his proceeding to Kufa, when he received the following letter:—

“Everything has been arranged and an organized army is awaiting for your assistance. Please make haste and come to us. You will be a criminal before God, if you do not comply with our request, for our aims are religious. It is your duty as an Imam to guide us in the path of God when we invite you.”

A wise counsel it was that the Meccans gave to Husain, when they suggested him to send to Kufa in advance one trusted by him, so that a correct idea might be obtained about the prevailing political atmosphere there. Accordingly, Muslim, a cousin of Husain, was asked to proceed to the place. The Kufians received the emissary of Husain with great enthusiasm and about 12,000 people were ready to pay allegiance to the son of Ali. To this effect, Muslim wrote to his master. With all his family Husain started for Kufa, though this time also he was much dissuaded from his intention. Despite Muslim's letter, we shall see how the Meccans' fears were well-grounded. The shadow is cast. We seem to scent the impending tragedy.

It was no fault of Muslim that he drew in his letter to Husain a rosy picture about the situation at Kufa. But it needs little time only to make a clear sky cloudy. Suddenly the tables were turned, and while Husain, with his retinue, was on the way to Kufa, unexpected dramatic events had already taken place there. Yezid was informed with a good deal of exaggeration how the goodnatured and sympathetic Ansar Governor, Noman Bin Bashir, was conniving at the actions of Muslim, Husain's man; and so, Yezid immediately ordered Abdulla, Governor of Basra, tyrannous and oppressive by nature and so quite-suited to his purpose, to take charge of the Governorship of Kufa also. The order to him from the Caliph ran thus: “You are the best arrow which I can shoot towards my enemies. Hence I order you to lose no time in proceeding to Kufa. Murder Ali's descendants without sparing a single soul among them. Search out Muslim, as one searches out a lost jewel, behead him and send his head to my Court.”

With all his irreligiousness and un-Islamic ways, Moawiah had at least a show of respect towards the Prophet's family, and before his death he had specially instructed and advised his son to treat Husain with due respect. The above letter shows that Yezid was bent upon carrying on a ruthless, and

crusade against Islam and the Ablul-Bait. We have already begun to scent pretty strongly the impending tragedy. The irresolute and cowardly Kufians' sudden enthusiasm cooled down also in a moment, when they were threatened by the new Governor with merciless wholesale slaughter in case they revolted against the Caliph. Muslim was hunted out, as ordered in the letter, and was mercilessly beheaded, his head being subsequently sent to Yezid. Muslim, as a worthy Hashimite, with that remarkable courage and joy, faced the inevitable end. Not satisfied with this, the two younger sons that he had taken with him, met also the same fate, two tender and guiltless souls, sacrificed at the altar of blood-curdling heartlessness.

Quite unaware of all these happenings and mainly trusting the hopeful tidings from Muslim, Husain with his family and relatives, as already stated, was marching towards Kufa. After several days of continuous journey, he came upon that barren, desert tract called Karbala. By this time, he had already received information regarding the heart-rending events that had taken place at Kufa. He was almost benumbed and perplexed with overwhelming grief. He did not know what to do, and was almost on the point of abandoning his project, intending to retrace his steps. But inscrutable are the ways of Allah. For, life and courage was infused in him from an unexpected quarter. Seeing his father in that helpless state the second son of Husain said thus to his father : "Father ! are we not on 'the right' ?" "By God ! we have ever been on 'the right,'" replied the father. Then added the other : "When it is so, what fear have we to give our lives for the right ?" "Who will not be electrified by such words ?"

Many had accompanied Husain from Mecca ; most probably they were under the impression that they could share the plunders of war. So, on his way, Husain thought it his duty to inform them of his grim and solemn purpose. He addressed them as follows : "You have witnessed what has befallen us. It is the nature of time to create constant changes. Virtue is vanishing fast and vice is surviving. A time has come when the believers cannot aim at Virtue but through death, and the infidel at his cherished vice but through life. I warn you with the announcement that all those that lack the courage to endure the wounds of swords and lances should separate from our ranks and leave us to our fate."

These words acted like an acid test. The Chaff, the faithless section of the followers, it is needless to mention, flew in different directions, leaving Husain with a handful of his best and worthiest followers, determined to follow him unto death. It was with these that he arrived at Karbala. Our main purpose in quoting the above sublime words is to show the sublime thought behind them, that give the gist of the way of Husain's inevitable and unparalleled sacrifice at the altar of truth and righteousness. The readers are also requested to follow Husain and his immortal retinue, and let the deserters take care of themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

Towards Kufa.

Husain and party had by this time reached the neighbourhood of Kufa. Yezid's General, Hurr, at the head of a reconnoitering force, coming from Kufa, approached the Imam. Although he was in the service of Yezid, he loved Husain and his family very much. He, therefore, explained the situation in detail to that worthy son, pointing out to him his delicate position, since Yezid's express order to him was to surround Husain and take him straight to Kufa. Somehow, his

sympathy and affection for the Ahlul-Bait had the upper hand ; he did not then carry out the order of his superior.

Proceeding further, and having made another halt, Husain once more pointed out to his followers the grim gravity of the situation. He said : "The form which the affairs have taken is manifest to you. The world has changed its colour. Virtue has vanished, leaving slight traces. This is the age of Wrong and the followers of Right have passed away. The time has come when the true believer has to separate himself from the mischievous mutineer and turn towards the Creator. Life with tyrants is hard to me, and I consider my death as martyrdom."

Husain had now almost reached the place of his tragedy. Hurr, who was watching and following him, was served by a messenger with a peremptory order from Yezid, the purport of which ran thus : "Arrest Husain, hold him fast and lead him to a waterless plain, unprotected on any side by a place of refuge. I have commanded my messenger not to part with you, until you have successfully executed my order, he would then return and inform me of all your affairs."

At last Husain and party reached Karbala, the place of affliction and trouble, the region where his and his family's slaughter was fated to occur. The melancholic and gloomy atmosphere around caused Husain to ask the people there the name of the place, and he was informed that it was called Karbala. He had already received the Divine signal as to this place being his final destination. His horse suddenly stopped, and refused to move on. Another horse was called for ; that also refused to move. Even a camel was tried, but to no purpose. Then it was that he enquired about the place. The Imam decided to camp there. The tragedy proper begins now in right, grim earnest. Let the readers read the following few lines from the able pen of Sir Syed Ameer Ali, so that their minds might be solemnly attuned to peruse patiently the succeeding dramatic events leading up to the climax. He says : "No event in history surpasses in pathos the scenes enacted on this spot. For days their tents were surrounded ; and as the cowardly hounds dared not come within the reach of the sword of Ali's son, they cut the victim's off from the waters of the Tigris. The sufferings of the poor band of martyrs were terrible."

CHAPTER IX.

At Karbala.

Husain and his party of seventy one followers arrived at Karbala on the second of Muharram. Hurr and his soldiers had already posted themselves near the Euphrates, so that Husain and his party might not proceed further and so that they might be prevented from taking water from the river. A waterless, dreary plain, scorching heat, and the river bank, blocked and guarded, what else is needed to make the situation miserable ? Men can forego food, but what about thirst ? Tender ones, old persons, women all thirsting, thirsting for hours and hours together, with the river close by, that was the worst of it, that was the grim irony.

The next day, there arrived Omar bin Saad, with an army of six thousand strong. Soon other commanders with their forces also rushed to the spot. Yezid's army, all told, numbering eighty thousand composed mostly of mercenary soldiers, filled the field of Karbala. What a sharp contrast between the contending parties not only in numbers, but in everything ! On the one side were ranged mail-clad warriors, chiefly mercenaries, who had enrolled themselves in the army for the sake of spoils only. Whereas, on the other side, were men, who in utter disregard

of all earthly considerations, had willingly accompanied Husain to defend the Sacred Cause of Islam. Although pinch of thirst and hunger, together with the anxiety for their women-folk, had driven the followers of Husain to desperation, yet they possessed in them those firm, stout, and unshaken hearts, which would have encouraged them in the execution of their noble mission, had even the lofty mountains of the world or the gurgling waves of the sea stood in their way. The one side represented mere brute force, whereas the other represented character and self-determination. Soul-force, righteousness, virtue, and truth, all these, were struggling hard against mighty brute-force, vice, wrong and falsehood.

Omar bin Saad held interviews with Husain, and the latter showed him the various letters written by the Kufians, and he explained to the General the purely spiritual aim of his undertaking. The hard-hearted and wretched Yezid could not brook his General's sympathetic interviews with Husain. His strong letter to Omar is worth quoting, because it reveals outright his devilish nature. The letter says :

"Omar bin Saad ! I learn that you spend full nights out of your camp along with Husain near the bank of the Euphrates. You hold friendly discourses with him on various topics and show him every mildness. Now, as soon as this reaches you and you read it, see that no drop of water is carried to Husain's camp, if you mind your own welfare. Post your men between the Euphrates and Husain's soldiers. Attack and destroy them. I allow the use of the water of the Euphrates to Christians and Jews, but shut it up against Husain, his relatives and friends. Guard the bank, so that they may not be able to take any water, in return for what they have done to the pious Caliph, Osman, who was so unjustly treated. Though I know that harming dead bodies does no good or evil; but as it drops from my pen, it is binding on you to trample their dead bodies under the hoofs of horses, after you have killed them. If you are reluctant in carrying out my orders, hand over the charge of my forces to the bearer, Shimar Ziljoushan, and come over to me to wait for my future orders."

"No slave would condescend to undertake the murder of an innocent soul like Husain." Thus remarked Omar, having read his superior's letter, save Yezid, the wretched and the most wicked, who would not have sympathised with the Ahlul-Bait, and whose heart would not have melted for the purest soul—Husain ? Persons like Hurr and Omar, though they were under Yezid's service, guided by worldly gains, could not but be moved, by the divinely nature of the Prophet's grandson, and Karbala's tragedy has its slightly relieving and soothing features in such human goodness that glimmered here and there, despite Yezidic darkness, threatening to envelope everything. It is pertinent to mention here in advance how even Shimar's wife turned away her face in utter disgust and horror, when her husband showed her in triumphant glee the gory head of Husain, and it is said that from that time forward she renounced all intercourse with him. (Shimar was the murderer of Husain).

Those pitiless puppets of Yezid not only denied water to the Prophet's holy souls, but even went to the length of ridiculing them beyond imagination. Horses, dogs, and even pigs, freely drank from the river, but vessels filled with water were shown to the thirsty Ahlul-Bait, only to be spilt before them with devilish glee and ridicule. This was more than adding insult to injury. See what one damned and debased said to Husain : "O Husain ! don't you see the crystal water, as pure and transparent as the atmosphere above ? By God ! you will not be able to allow a drop pass through your throat until you die with a parched tongue."

With absolutely no chance to taste a drop of water, those in Husain's camp, young and old, women and children, passed the seventh day of *Muharram also. Oh ! the parched lips of the tender ones, no water even to moisten their lips! And mothers sitting by them in utter helplessness! The eighth of Muharram dawned. Husain could not bear to see the piteous plight of children panting for water. That night, he sent his brother, Abbas, along with his fifty valiant men, to bring water from the river. It was not without service struggle with the enemies, who were posted on the bank, that they succeeded at last to bring to the camp twenty pitchers of water. After this, it is needless to mention, that Omar made arrangements to see that the bank was guarded more carefully and strictly.

In the morning, on the ninth of Muharram, Husain saw a big army advancing towards his camp. Mounting upon his horse, he marched towards the advancing force. That was the opportune moment to have his last say to them, for, he thought it his solemn duty to try all possible means to avoid bloodshed and slaughtering, to prevent them from committing the worst crime of slaughtering innocent souls. Thus, he addressed: "O people that call themselves Moslems ! Know who I am and what lineage I have. Then consider well, whether it is allowable for you to murder me. I am the only surviving son of your Prophet's daughter. I am the son of Ali, the selected servant of God. I declare, for your information my faith in God, His Holy Prophets and all that was sent down on Muhammad, the last of them. Was not Hamza, the chief of the martyrs during the time of the Prophet, an Uncle of my father ? Was not Jaffer, who was given wings to fly to Paradise, my father's own brother ? Did not the Prophet declare about my deceased brother and myself, 'These two are the Chiefs of the Youths of Paradise' ? Did he not say, 'I leave behind me two weighty things, the Book of God and my children'. These things have certainly reached your ears. If you confess my statement, you are on the right. But if you think I lie, which God forbid, I have never done in my life, there are still alive the companions of the Prophet. You can ascertain this from them."

Then Husain had a conference with Omar bin Saad to impress upon him and his accomplices what a heavy crime it would be on their part to attack him who had done no wrong. But finding that his advice had no effect at all on him, he sent a message to the enemy through Abbas, requesting a night's respite for prayer and meditation before the commencement of the fight. Better and wiser counsel prevailing, the respite was granted. Then the two armies retired. Despite this temporary lull and truce, the members of Husain's camp continued to suffer more and more from unbearable thirst and hunger. The shades of night had fallen fast, and Husain's camp was surrounded on all sides by the enemy's forces. The impending gloom of tragedy seemed to have already cast its shadow over that dreary, desert plain. All forces of darkness and devilry seemed to comprise in a body to destroy those helpless band of innocent souls. Oh ! what a heavy, feverish night it was !

CHAPTER X.

The Sad Night.

That sad, unforgettable night, ever memorable in history ! What a thrill of horror, sympathy and sensation, must pass through our minds, when each scene of that night seems to pass afresh before us ! So vividly is the whole picture drawn

* Muharram is the first month of Islamic Calendar.

on our mental canvas. Callous Kargala ! How dark and fierce thou looked that night !

The wicked soldiers of Yezid were restlessly guarding the tents of Husain. Deafening and sickening was the noise among them beating of drums, blowing of trumpets, sharpening of swords. They were making all horrible preparations to massacre the matchless innocents. They had lost their heads ; and hearts, of course, they had not. Even wild animals, even the most carnivorous specimens, would have shrunk from approaching those holy band of Husain. But these inhuman human wolves were bent upon their foulest crime. Their howling must have sent a shudder of fear into the minds of Husain's women and children. O ! in what a pathetic plight they were, already famished by hunger and parched by thirst !

Within those holy tents, quite a different atmosphere prevailed, despite the threatening calamity. All were engaged in deep meditation and soul-thrilling prayers to God. That extraordinary divine spirit and devotion had enkindled and enlivened all of them, and old and young were every moment anxiously awaiting to claim the partnership of inevitable death. A new life was glowing within them. They would stand by Hussin, ready to be a willing sacrifice in his cause. "Let the morning dawn, and we shall show how to defend the son of the Apostle of God to the last." These were their words. Each was preparing with that peculiar joy to meet the lord. We shall quote one typical incident of that night to show how the sublimest spirit animated Husain's people. Zainub, Husain's sister, dressing her two little sons in their prettiest garments, impressed in them the gravity of the sacrifice to be made in the following words :

"Mind not your ages, but think of your connections. Your paternal grandfather, Jaffer, was so brave that as long as he was alive, none but he could carry the Prophet's banner and he held it so fast that it could not be captured by the enemy. Only once it fell to the ground, when both his hands were severed from his body and he could no longer hold it. Your maternal grandfather, Ali, has established a name unsurpassed by any. Victory had been certain, in whichever battle he was asked to appear. Be it known to you that just as the field of Mina, near Mecca, is reddened with the blood of animals, sacrificed at the Haj pilgrimage so will the opposite plains be rendered crimson tomorrow by the blood of the Prophet's family, and its supporters. Would you allow me on the Day of Judgment to present an honourable face before my mother, Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet ? This can only be done by your interception between your uncle and his enemies, by sacrificing your lives for his. Should you do so, I shall excuse your dues of my milk with which I nourished you in your infancy. I shall honour your blood by colouring my face with it and I shall glorify your bodies by laying them on the carpet of the Prophet."

To Husain, heaviest and most trying must have been that night. But he had the one supreme consolation that at the last hour he still retained an extraordinarily staunch band of followers, who had unanimously resolved to stand by him and die for him. He said : "In fact I am proud of these friends of mine. None by this time could ever get such a number of true and sincere friends as I have". Even after informing them that he was prepared to stand the trial alone, that the enemy was desirous of having his blood alone, and that all were at perfect liberty to make good their escape in the cover of darkness, adamantive was their resolution. "Never may God shew us the day that we survive." Who will not be electrified to face death or even worse, having heard the pathetic statement from Husain. It runs thus :

"Now, O people ! I withdraw my hold upon you. I lighten your shoulders from the burden of your pledged attachment to me and I freely allow you to desert me. If you are afraid or ashamed of being blamed, I assure you that the darkness of night would sufficiently cover your being recognised. I advise you in this way, because the enemy is desirous of my blood alone and would not question any one else, provided he is sure of his hold on me."

Restless, sleepless, and busy was Husain that night, going through multitudinous responsible duties. He had to pacify and console the ladies and children, instilling in them that spiritual courage and life, so that they may face as true martyrs the worst distress that was in store the next day. He had to impart his final religious lessons to all his friends and relations who had so readily volunteered to suffer in the holy cause. He must prepare everything for the next day's defence, and he must put forth all his spiritual fervour in his final communion with God, so that he might obtain from that Perennial Fountain, full, invincible, inward strength and courage. O ! what a tower of patience, determination, and faith ! And at the height of distress, what a deep devotion to Him ! Self-abnegation and selflessness, entire and whole-hearted submission to His Supreme Will—all these reached their marvellous climax and sublimity in him. It was a momentous, wondrous memorable night, the holiest struggling against the unholyest. Allaho-Akbar !

CHAPTER XI.

The Day of Martyrdom.

Over Karbala dawned the tenth day of Moharram, the last day on earth for those little band of martyrs. Along with his associates, Husain performed the morning prayers, and about this, the sickly son of Husain, Imam Zain-ul-Abidin, the only survivor of the Prophet's family, states thus: "My father performed his prayers in the dusk of the tenth morning, followed by his associates and when he finished it, he lifted up his hands and said: "O Lord ! I rely on Thee in all my sufferings and Thou art my hope in all my trials and misfortunes ; worldly troubles are such that they carry away one's patience and control over one's self ; if Thou dost not help me, Thou givest opportunity to the enemies to laugh and ridicule. Thou art my refuge and place of safety. I complain to Thee and to none but Thee of my adverse circumstances. Thou wilt grant me patience to endure troubles that await me and wilt keep me firm and resolute to suffer ungrudgingly the coming hardships. Thou art the controller of all Destinies and it is in Thy power to make one attain one's object or lose it."

The battle-drum was beaten ; the combat was about to commence. Even at that last moment the Imam wanted to point out to the enemies the bitter folly of their move, wishing to dissuade them from committing the foulest crime on earth. Not that he was afraid of death at their hands, but he had that deep and limitless compassion and mercy towards those misguided opponents. Along with his faithful small band, he came out cap-a-pie into the battlefield and seated on a camel, he delivered a stirring sermon in Arabic to the party in front, appealing to them in the name of God and his Beloved Prophet of Arabia, not to commit such a horrible deed. The men in front stood dumb-founded and made no reply. Before the Imam, Burair had already stirred the hearts of the opponents with a speech. All were fully convinced, all were deeply moved by these speeches, but none dared to do the right. The naturally sympathetic Hurr was now in a

fix. Husain's appeals went straight into his heart. At any rate, these speeches saved him. He, with his three companions, went over to the Imam's side, and he also addressed the enemies on behalf of the Prophet's family. The only reply to his speech was a volley of arrows. The Imam summed up his arguments thus :

" I have now finished my arguments and have declared my choice of death while fighting along with my few disciples. But remember, by God ! You will not survive long after us. The mill-stone of death will roll over your heads and will grind you to powder. My father has informed me the prediction of my grandfather to this effect."

" Now begin your attack. Let your friends join you and let what is to happen, happen. Attack and give us no time ; for, I have entrusted all my affairs to the powerful hand of God who controls every creature."

Husain then rode on a horse, arranged his loving companions' line, and waited for the commencement of the battle from the other side.

A man named Abdulla came up at a gallop on his horse. Surprised to see fire kindled for safety around the Imam's tent, he haughtily and impertinently exclaimed : "Husain ! it be announced to you that you have chosen fire for yourself even in this world from now." The thirsty Imam prayed to Allah for an immediate punishment for the wretch, with the result that his horse, to the great surprise of all, jumped into the fiery trench, where both the rider and the ridden were burnt to ashes.

Immediately after this, Omar bin Saad picked up his arrow and calling others to be his witness, discharged it as the first arrow towards the Imam. It was a sign to begin the combat in right earnest. Arrows after arrows were sent by others in the same direction ; but none were killed. Then there ensued single combats. Two persons from Omar's side came out and desired somebody from the Imam's side to fight. Accordingly, two from the holy band went forth for the contest, slaying the two enemies in a moment. A state of guerilla warfare continued for some time, with single person or in pairs from either side, untill fifty faithfuls of the Imam went to the isles of Bliss, sending hundreds of beastly foes to regions of eternal fire. Hurr exhibited extraordinary valour, swiftly despatching many from the enemies' rank. "He fell upon the columns of the enemy like an enraged tiger and tried to break through them. He created quite a bloody sight in the attempt and killed eighty-two of their number." He kept on slaughtering the foes untill the last moment, though he was besieged on all sides by showers of darts. He was utterly fatigued, and had almost neared his end. He was taken to Husain's camp. "O Lord ! Accept him as Thy Guest in Paradise and have him matched with Hourie." He died a brave and true martyr.

The aged veteran from Husain's camp, Muslim bin Ausaja, showed a lion's ferocity and valour in killing one after another fifty of the best soldiers of the enemy who were sent to face him. "Though enfeebled by age and three day's hunger, he exhibited to the world, not by words, but by deeds, that it is not bread and water (alone) that keeps a man alive and strong, but his faith in the Lord and the word of the Almighty." At last he also fell a prey to the enemy's darts. Husain blessed him, reciting the verse, "There have been some whom the Decree of God has overtaken and some still in expectation of it and have not changed their minds." Thus, by noon time had fallen many of the valiant followers of the Imam, and there remained only the relatives. Aged men and mere boys fought like lions and fell like true martyrs. Famished and thirsty, they fought with invincible, divine valour.

It is related that on the tenth day when the grim fight ensued between Imam Husain's party and Yazid's men, who were thirty thousand according to a report and people were being killed like chaff and when the sincere and faithful companions of Husain were sacrificing themselves, one by one, so much so that even Bareer Hamdani was too killed then and there the mother of Abdullah Kalbi, whose name was Qamar, called forth his son and said to him thus:-"Although thou art the peace of my heart and the income of whole of my life and thy separation is unwilling and painful, but what can I do? I see that the earning of Fatimah (Prophet's dear daughter and the mother of Imam Husain) is being robbed. Nothing is more dear to me than the son of the Prophet-Husain-thou seest that the Imam often looks with the sight of sigh towards the tent of chastity. His restlessness and anxiety is considerably increased since morning. The day of faithfulness and name is this very day and that I wish thou shouldst not too spare thy life."

That blessed son of that lady replied:-"Thousand lives may be sacrificed at Husain's altar; blessed is he who partakes in this holy task, only I wish I may bid farewell to my wife, for, only 17 days have passed, that I married and that she has left all her relations for my sake." Qamar said:-"What harm is there in doing so, but know that women are generally fools. I am afraid lest you may be led away by her love."

He proceeded straight towards his wife and spoke:-"Though it is not a custom that a newly married bridegroom should go to fight leaving his bride behind, yet I am obliged and helpless. How it can be endured when I see the house of the son-in-law of the Prophet destroyed and routed and that I should keep aloof myself? I wish I may get myself sacrificed at his altar." That sincere lady sighed and said:-"Alas! there is no Jihad prescribed for women-folk, otherwise I myself would have also availed of this opportunity of sacrifice." I, however, am content with your proposal, you are going away but you should also make this promise before the Imam that without me you would not enter paradise."

In short, both these couple came before the Imam. Wahab requested for the permission of going to the fight. The wife addressed:-"O son of the Prophet! I have two objects in view too, the one being that you should take promise from my husband that he should not go to Heaven except with me, the other being that I may be permitted to remain as a servant of Ahlul-Bait اهل البيت (the family of the Prophet) so that I may be safe from the sight of illegal men." The Imam having heard this, wept, and Wahab spoke:-"You are witness that I promise that without my wife I would never step into Paradise and you make her remain amongst the servants of Ahlul-Bait."

However, Wahab, proceeded to the battle-field and having rooted in ground the spear began reciting the quatrette :

انا وهب بن عبدالله الكلبي * سوف تروني وترون ضربي
وحملي وصولتي في الحرب * ليس جهادي في الوغاء اللهب

(t. e.) "I am Wahab son of Abdullah Kalbi. You will soon see me and my strokes and my attacks in the battle. My fight is not like that of children playing."

Ali Akbar, the son of Husain عليه السلام a youth of eighteen summers only, and who resembled the Prophet in every respect, was the next precious victim. Amidst the woeful cries of the ladies, controlling with difficulty and surging paternal emotions, Husain himself equipped that handsome youth with the necessary garments and fighting implements, and sent him to the field, with his pathetic words addressed to God: "Bear witness, O my Lord! I despatch a son, that resembles Thy Prophet most in formation of body, in character, and in tone and in mode of speaking, to fall into the jaws of death. Whenever we grew restless with a burning desire to see Thy Prophet, we cooled our eyes, by casting a glance on this young form."

Seeing such a noble and handsome youth, even the enemy could not but exclaim with admiration thus: "It seems the Prophet has returned with fresh youth and vigour." And to the admiring foes, he spoke: "I am Ali, son of Husain, who is the son of Ali. By the Kaba, the House of God, we are your masters through the Prophet. I now intend to destroy you by my sword, assisting the cause of my father. By God, those born of adultery can never rule us". With all their admiration and with all the full knowledge about the superior position of the Ahlul-Bait, the wretched and wicked foes were relentless and resolute in their dire and dark destruction. What could valour do? The undaunted youth was exhausted by the scorching heat, and with unbearable thirst he returned to his father after a desperate struggle. The father's piteous helplessness to cool him even with drop of water, must have created a scene unparalleled in history, and this feeble pen refuses to write about it. The father could only give the following consoling words to his dearest one: "Your grandfather is waiting with a cup of heavenly drink to quench your thirst. Return and prepare for death; may it be wholesome to you." Why continue the heart-rending narration of this youth's further desperate struggle with those pitiless foes? He was pierced through and through with arrows and spears, and wounded everywhere with repeated attacks of swords. Anybody else in Husain's place would have been shocked to instantaneous death, at the sight of such a bloody butchery of a dear one. Ali also followed others. Here, in that worthy Imam, patience, fortitude, faith, control and will power, reached their sublimest heights. The darkest hour of tragedy had already approached and the severest trial awaited the grandson of the Prophet. Allah could alone arm him with that needed grim determination. It is said that the Imam had an erect body and a black beard in the morning of that tragic day. Repeated and swift clamities had within a few hours bent low his frame, and all hairs had turned completely grey.

In that helpless and exhausted state, the Imam mounted his horse, and lifting up his infant son of six months, Ali Asghar by name, cried: 'O Lord! This is the last ruby in my treasures. Him I sacrifice in Thy path". Then, to the blood-thirsty wolves in front of him, he made this most pathetic appeal: "Of what crime can you accuse this child? You blame me for not acknowledging the sovereignty of Yezid. But can any law, any religion, or any sane brain, lay any charge on this infant? This infant of mine is about to die of thirst. His mother has lost her milk through lack of water. Just a few drops to refresh the child: If you think that I want water trickishly, putting forward this young one, I will leave him in your arms. You may quench his thirst and return him to me". The pathetic plight of that innocent babe, no doubt, frozen and benumbed the hearts of the onlookers. Omar saw the magic effect, and immediately ordered one Harmala, the stoniest specimen of the lot, to carry out the blackest deed. He transfixed the babe's neck with a poisoned arrow and the tender thing breathed its last with its last gaze and smile at Husain. The cup of misery was now quite full. Inconceivable distress and agony filled the heart of that great soul.

CHAPTER XII.

The Grand Martyrdom.

So, the moment approached for Husain to offer his own sacred blood to the thirsty and greedy devil. He, who was so greatly loved and honoured by the Prophet of Arabia, was in such a helpless plight, that every inch of the earth below and every span of the sky above, seemed to be bearing the venomous nature against him. Even at that last moment, his request to Omar, either to send him back to the place of his grand-father's grave to lead a peaceful life, or to allow him a draught of water, in case of their grim determination to fight against him, was totally unheeded. "Not a single drop will be allowed to you," was the cursed and callous reply from Omar. He then delivered stirring sermons to the crowd facing him, but they fell on deaf ears and deadened hearts. He was only throwing pearls before swines. Still, the readers who must surely possess the finer feelings, should not be deprived of the chance. One pretty long address is quoted below :

"Know ye: I am the son of Ali of the Hashimite tribe. This is enough greatness for me, if I am to boast at all. My grand-father is the Apostle of God, whose superiority over every living being is confirmed. We are certainly Divine lights illuminated to guide the world. Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, is my mother, and Jaffar, the one gifted with emerald wings, is my uncle. The Divine Scripture was sent down to our house and it contains injunctions and precepts for the guidance and prosperity of the world. We are a Divine shelter and refuge for the inhabitants of the earth, both in its external and internal meaning. We are the owners of the Fountain of Kouser and through obedience and devotion to us, people can expect the grant of cups, filled by the Prophet with the heavenly drink. It is an undesired fact that the thirst of every virtuous being will be quenched by such cups to be presented by Ali. This Ali is a Divine Guide, whose obedience and the safeguarding of whose rights are compulsorily enjoined on the whole of humanity. Our friends are the greatest gainers and our enemies the worst losers on the 'Day of Resurrection.' 'The Tree of Thooba' will exclusively cast its shade on those that visit our grave. Their residence will be the Central Paradise, and they will own spotless, bright souls."

Cavalry, infantry, archers and lancers, surrounded the helpless and lonely Imam from all sides. He had already despatched to hell numerous foes in single combats, and was now desperately killing right and left hordes of assailants. His sacred body was bleeding with countless wounds, and yet the Lion of God wielded his sword most effectively. Said one eye-witness: "I have never, before or after this incident, seen one wounded, alone, heart-broken with grief and bereaved of sons, relations and friends, making such a resolute dash with full presence of mind and charging the enemy with such courage and vehemence as Husain."

According to the report of Imam Zainul Abedeen, who was the son of Imam Husain, that night, before his father was martyred, the Imam Husain was sitting, and his paternal aunt Zainab was looking after his illness. Then and there his father called his companions in the tent; there sat the slave of Abu Zar Ghaffari whose name was Huwi and who was sharpening his sword and Imam Husain was reciting the following verses, the translation of which runs as follows:—

يادھراف لك من خليل * كم لك بالاشراق والاصيل
وانما الامر الى الجليل * وكل حى سالك السبيل

"Have you been pleased with me" ? Husain said :- "I, Allah and His Apostle have been pleased with you."

Gentlemen, let us do justice when even Christians have so much regard for the Imam what would have been the heart of Shamar, who inspite of being a so-called Muslim, but being blinded by greed, did not fear Allah or His Prophet. He severed the head of Imam and moreover, did certain mischiefs which my pen cannot write or describe them.

Then the world darkened. Storms rose high in saharas. Seas became rough and stormy and a cry was heard between the sky and earth :- "الا قتل الحسين بكربلا" 'Surely Husain is killed at Karbala.' "O the people of the world ! Know Ye that the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad was ruthlessly and mercilessly killed like a goat or sheep at Karbala. Surely the curse be upon the oppressing people."

It will now be easy to understand, if not to sympathise with, the frenzy of sorrow and indignation to which the adherents of Ali and his children give vent on the recurrence of the anniversary of Husain's martyrdom. Husain and the other martyrs died to live for ever. Their martyrdom revived Islam, the religion of God, established by the Holy Prophet, Muhammad. Their martyrdom was for the holiest cause, to uphold the highest Islamic ideals. Yezid's unauthorized suzerainty represented in full and afresh Pre-Islamic Arabia of undiluted vices, and Islam that stood for virtue, truth, and righteousness, was threatened with annihilation wholesale. Husain's martyrdom, with his kith and kin, was the only sure, efficacious and infallible remedy, to root out the cankers of vices and irreligiousness, sapping the very foundation of Islamic commonwealth.

What with all the temporal, bribed power of Yezid, what with all the mighty hordes of mercenary soldiers, he was utterly defeated in his purpose, and was put to unmentionable shame and ignominy. A few handful of martyrs, hungry and thirsty, faced thousands, killed many and they could not but, at last, succumb overpowered by numbers. Thousands slaughtering a few, that cannot be called victory in any sense—"Success sways with the breath of Heaven." Those who fought and died most willingly and gladly in Allah's Cause, ultimately triumphed.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Last Phase.

The wicked tyrants of Yezid were not satisfied with the brutal murder of Imam Husain, the most horrible crime against the most innocent soul. That their malice, oppression, and hard heartedness, went further to the extremest limits, is proof positive and self-evident as to their motive being anything but political. The women of the Ahlul-Bait, who had already suffered unimaginable distress and agony along with their men and children, and who had sacrificed all of them in the holy Cause, bereft of tender ones, had to experience fresh calamities at the hands of the cursed callousness. But it must be said to their credit, pride, and glory, that they maintained to the last their dignity and womanhood, so much so, Yezid was put to shame for having dishonoured and distressed them, for having taken them as captives to Kufa in the most disgraceful way. He was compelled to see that they were escorted back to Medina in a manner befitting their status and position.

Having murdered Husain, those agents of tyranny hurried towards Husain's tents, where they carried on a shameless loot. Even the hoods of women were not spared, and what to say about their other apparels. The very skin, on which the surviving sickly Imam, Zain-ul-Abidin, was lying, was not spared. Shimar, the murderer of Husain, would have killed, then and there, the sickly Imam, but for the intercession of Omar bin Saad. Then they set fire to the tents. What a confusion and consternation this sort of vandalism and barbarism must have created in the minds of those helpless ones, who feared they might be burnt alive, and who ran hither and thither, knowing not what to do! But the noble woman, Zainub, who so nobly sacrificed her two little sons for the sake of Husain, her brother, maintained that perfect presence of mind, and so was able to save the situation by bringing all together at a convenient open place. It was with great difficulty that she managed to bring under her safe custody the invalid Imam.

In that sad plight, in the open field of Karbala, exposed in every sense and surrounded by those heartless tyrants, Husain's people spent two full nights, with none to soothe their bruised and burning hearts, though there were many to torment, tease, and insult them in all possible ways. Leaving the dead bodies of the martyrs as they were, without caring to bury them, but stripping them of the little things that were still, on them, the enemy, on the third day, started for Kufa, taking with them the distressed family, who were mounted on camels. Those noble women of the Prophet's family were brought to Kufa with as much disgrace as possible. Writes an eye-witness.

"I was present in Kufa when the pillaged family of Husain reached there. Imam Zain-ul-Abidin was seated on the bare back of a camel; bound in chains. His thighs were bleeding and he was uttering,

ودخلوا بحريم الى الكوفة و اذا بعلي بن الحسين (عليه السلام) على بعير بغير غطاء ولا
وطاء و فخذاه ينفحان دماً وهو يبكي و يقول :-

يا امة السوء لا ستقبل ربكم ☆ يا امة لم تراعي جدنا فينا

لو اننا و رسول الله يجمعنا ☆ يوم القيامة ما كنتم تقولونا

تسيرونا على الاقتاب عارية ☆ كأننا لم نشيد فيكم ديننا

بنو امية ما هذا الوقوف على ☆ تلك المصائب لم تصفوا الداعينا

و تصفون علينا كفكم فرحاً ☆ وانتم في فجاج الارض تردونا

ليس جدى رسول الله و بلكم ☆ اهدى البرية من سبل المضلينا

يا وقعة الطف قد اورتنى كدأ ☆ والله يهتك استار المضلينا

"O cursed people! May not the Lord moisten your soil with showers! You have not paid any regard to our grandfather, the Prophet. What reply can you give, if we and the Prophet jointly question you on the Day of Reckoning? You carry us on camels without either litters or saddle cloth on them. You treat us like ordinary people, as if we are not the Founders of Religion. O Omiades!

"O Time! Woe to Thee! What an unfaithful friend thou art! In the morn and in the eve there are slaughtered many by Thy hands! O the Time does not give concession to anybody nor it takes any reward! Surely everything is in the hands of Allah! Every living man is walking on the path of death!"

Imam Zainul Abedeen said that his father recited these three or four times and he understood his purport. His heart trembled and his eyes were full of tears, and he understood that the calamity could not be removed. His paternal aunt heard these verses and as the women folk have no power of endurance, she became uncontrollable. She stood, ran without her shoes and nothing on her head. Her veil was hanging behind on the ground. She went to Imam Hussain, cried and expressed her grief and said to him :—

« واما عمتي زينب لما سمعت بذلك بكيت و اظهرت الحزن و الجزع و اقبلت نجيذا بالها
نحو الحسين و قالت له يا اخي و قرعة عيني لبت اعدمني الحياة يا خليفة الراضين و ثمال
الباقين فنظر اليها الحسين و قال يا اختاه لا يذهبن بملك الشيطان فان اهل السموات
يموتون و اهل الارض لا يبقون و كل شئى هالك الا وجهه له الحكم و اليه ترجعون فابن
ابي و ابن جدتي الذين هما خير مني ولي بهما اسوة حسنة اقسمت عليك بحقى اذا انا قتلت
فلانشقى على جيباً و لا نتمشى على وجهائهم و وجهها نحو الخيام الخ »

"O my Brother, the successor of the past, and the cooling object of my eyes, and the token of the present living progeny of the Holy Prophet! I wished I would have been dead ere long." He looked towards her and said : "My Sister! Let Satan not carry away thy endurance. Surely the people of Heaven shall die and the people of the earth shall not remain alive and everything is perishable except His face. To Him the order returns and everything will return unto Him. Where is my father? Where is my grand-father, those that were better than me and in whom I find the best example? I make you swear that if I die, thou shalt not tear garments nor shalt thou scratch thy face."

Wounded and bleeding all over, he dragged himself to the river bank for a cool drink. But before he could taste a drop of that precious liquid, his mouth was wounded by an arrow, and the water in his hands was full of blood. In distress, disgust and agony, he said: "Destiny has stopped my share of water in this world. I must wait until I get a cup of heavenly drink from my grandfather's hands." Says Ameer Ali: "Wounded and dying, he dragged himself to the river side for a last drink; they turned him with arrows from there". "Gibbon writes: "Alone, weary, and wounded, he seated himself at the door of his tent. As he tasted a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart; and his son and nephew, two beautiful youths were killed in his arms. He lifted his hands to Heaven—they were full of blood and he uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead."

When the Imam felt assured that he would soon succumb to death, he ultimately let himself lose and fell down from his horse. "Raising himself for one desperate charge, he threw himself among the Ummeyyads, who fell back on every side. But faint with loss of blood he soon sank to the ground, and then the murderous crew rushed upon the dying hero. They cut off his head, (he "was

slain with three and thirty strokes of lances and swords") trampled on his body, and subjected it to every ignominy in the old spirit of *Hind. They carried the martyr's head to the castle of Kufa, and the inhuman Obaidullah struck it on the mouth with a cane. 'Alas' exclaimed an aged Mussalman, 'on these lips have I seen the lips of the Apostle of God.'

According to another report, Imam Husain fainted due to excess of bleeding. The cursed Omar-bin-Saad shouted,—"Cut down his head, Husain has no power to fight any more." According to the report of 'Hazanul Momineen', one of the slayers asked another, "What! if we sever the head of the grandson of our Prophet, what will the people say?" "It is better to engage a man of another religion than Islam for this purpose by bribery". Omar bin Saad asked a Christian who was a new comer over there in matters of merchandise to sever the head of an old, fainted, bleeding man who was lying over there and in return he would get much benefit. That Christian went over there and saw that the corpse of young and old were lying in bleeding and disfigured state. Amongst them was a babe who had an arrow struck in his gullet lying on the ground with closed palms. Adjacent to him was the body of a holy man pierced with innumerable darts and arrows, closed eyes, bleeding, faced towards Kaba lying downcast and that he was uttering something nimbly. The Christian thought he must have been cursing his enemies. When he reached near, he heard he was praying to Allah thus :—"O Lord! Husain has fulfilled his promise. Thou shouldst also fulfill the promise too: Pardon the followers of my Grand-father". Hearing so far he presumed that surely that personality ought to be a supernatural and an extraordinary man. "Even in this helpless state, he still prays for people for their welfare", the Christian grew peculiar and asked : "O the saint of Allah, who are you and on what account you have been so much tormented"?

Imam Husain opened his eyes and told the enquirer in a feeble voice thus:—"What purport hast thou? The work for which thou hast come over to me do it." He said :—"I am not of the army. I have come afresh. Tell me soon your circumstances, for my heart is being cut to pieces."

Husain said :—"I am the grandson of their Prophet and their guest. I am Husain son of Ali. I am hungry and thirsty and am being killed illegitimately at their hands. These corpses around me are that of my brothers, my cousins, my dear ones and that of my companions. They have routed the whole of my house, even did they not spare a babe of six months." The Christian wept and said :—"I have dreamt last night." Imam said :—"You have seen Christ who gives you the glad tidings of Heaven."

Having heard this, the Christian began kissing Imam's feet and recited the Holy Kalima :- لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

"There is no deity except Allah and that Mohammad is His Apostle." This man wanted the permission from Imam Husain for fight on his behalf. Imam allowing him said thus :-

جراك الله "May Allah reward you with His best reward." In short, that man marched towards the combat, killed many and got killed and shouted :- هل رضيت عني يا ابا عبد الله

* 'Hind' was the name of the mother of Muaviya. In a battle against the Prophet, she chewed the liver of Hamza who was the uncle of the Prophet.

"Have you been pleased with me" ? Husain said :- "I, Allah and His Apostle have been pleased with you."

Gentlemen, let us do justice when even Christians have so much regard for the Imam what would have been the heart of Shimar, who inspite of being a so-called Muslim, but being blinded by greed, did not fear Allah or His Prophet. He severed the head of Imam and moreover, did certain mischiefs which my pen cannot write or describe them.

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"I was present in Kufa when the pillaged family of Husain reached there. Imam Zain-ul-Abidin was seated on the bare back of a camel; bound in chains. His thighs were bleeding and he was uttering,

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وطاء و فخذاه ينفحان دماً وهو يبكي ويقول :-

يا امة السوء لاسقبال ريعكم ☆ يا امة لم تراعي جدنا فينا
لو اننا و رسول الله بجمعنا ☆ يوم القيامة ما كنتم تقولونا
تسيرونا على الاقتاب عارية ☆ كأننا لم نشيد فيكم ديننا
بنو امية ما هذ الوقوف على ☆ تلك المصائب لم تصغوا الداعينا
و تصفقون علينا كفكم فرحاً ☆ واتم في فجاج الارض تردوا
ليس جدى رسول الله ويلكم ☆ -- اهذى البرية من سبل المضلينا
يا وقعة الطف قد اورتنى كدأ ☆ والله يهتك استار المضلينا

"O cursed people! May not the Lord moisten your soil with showers! You have not paid any regard to our grandfather, the Prophet. What reply can you give, if we and the Prophet jointly question you on the Day of Reckoning? You carry us on camels without either litters or saddle cloth on them. You treat us like ordinary people, as if we are not the Founders of Religion. O Omíades!

What does your silence mean at our distress and hardship? Why do you not reply to our cries? Out of joy, you clap your hands behind us, and you tease us on the way. May you be destroyed! Was not our grandfather, the Prophet, who saved the world from falling into the pit of ignorance?"

From Kufa, the heads of Karbala's martyrs and the Prophet's family were taken to Yezid's court at Damascus, as it was feared that the stirring speeches of the surviving Imam and those of Zainub and Umme Kulsoom would create a revolution against Yezid's government. Their very presence, so distressed and dishonoured, was quite enough to arouse popular indignation against the perpetrators of such heinous crimes. But at Damascus too, the distressed family was able to extract that legitimate sympathy from all. Yezid found his position too hot. Even his wife, sorely feeling for the women of Husain's family, scolded him outright. Yezid tried to please the aggrieved members, with a show of special favours and regard. He even vainly tried to point out that he was not responsible for Husain's murder. He returned to the Ahlul-Bait the pillaged articles and also the heads of martyrs. He had already done his worst in the most deliberate manner, and all this show of repentance and politeness was of no use at all. Yezid was forced to admit his guilt. He could not stand the searching questions of Zainul-Abidin. What else is needed to show how the tyrant totally failed to achieve anything except ineffaceable ignominy, and damnation? On the other hand success in its high moral sense, immortal fame and place, were all vouchsafed to the heroes of Karbala. There was a grand triumph of martyrdom.

With due honour, those noble ladies and the Imam were sent back to Medina, escorted by five hundred horsemen under Noman-bin-Basheer. Contrast their triumphant journey back to Medina, with their distressed and dishonoured position as captives, when they were taken from Karbala to Kufa, and thence to Damascus. This is another proof of the martyr's ultimate success. At Karbala, the holy family spent a few days in deep mourning, after giving the due burials to the bodies of their martyrs. They left the cursed place for Medina. The Medinites, one and all, greeted the distressed members with violent mournings. For days, together, the whole of Medina presented a gloomy appearance.

Although the fierce and merciless followers of Yezid had killed Husain in his sheer helplessness, yet none of them could remain happy, as history tells us. With the exception of one or two all of them were killed, disgraced and tortured. Later on, the escaped ones also perished.

The wretch had tried to uproot the lineage of Fatima, but Allah has filled the earth with her descendants today. On the contrary, no one is present today, rightly descending from the slayers of Husain, and this fact reminds one of the words of the Holy Quran, which says: "And do not think Allah to be heedless of what the unjust do". (14:42).

CHAPTER XIV.

Fore Knowledge About The Martyrdom.

Husain's martyrdom has got its own beauty, sublimity and peculiarity. For one thing, he entered into that life and death struggle with Yezid, fully prepared to meet the worst, and he was long beforehand aware of the inevitable marked out for him. Armed with such a previous knowledge, he did not avoid the great trial, he did not shrink from it, but was only awaiting it, so that he might carry out his bounden duty in Allah's Cause.

As a matter of fact, his martyrdom was a topic of common knowledge to the Prophet and his immediate people, Fatima, Ali and to many of the companions of the Prophet.

Ali relates what the Prophet had told him about Husain's martyrdom. The Prophet was informed by Gabriel that Husain would be slain at the Euphrates.

Ayesha says that the Prophet had told her that Husain would be slain beside a river.

Umme Salmah, the daughter of Saad, is said to have related that Gabriel came to her to inform the Prophet of the ruthless slaughter of Husain on the Iraqi field by the inhabitants there from.

The son of Asakir says that Gabriel showed to the Prophet some earth of the slaughter-field of Husain.

Baghvi, the son of Saku, says that once the Prophet spoke that his Husain would be martyred on the field of Karbala in Iraq and that whosoever might be then present should take it to be their duty to obey and support Husain in every possible way.

In short, there are hundreds of such authentic reports that bear attestation to the fact that the tragic event of Husain was long before passed to the knowledge of his most beloved Prophet by the Almighty Allah.

Husain, having decided to leave Medina for Mecca, paid his parting visit to his grandfather's grave. Closing his eyes, he saw his grandfather in a vision, who spoke to him thus: "O Son ! God desireth to see thee killed and thy ladies carried as captives in chains without veils on their faces. God hath reserved a lofty position for thee which thou alone can reach by the ladder of martyrdom."

On the day of leaving Medina, many ladies and prominent gentlemen approached Husain, and among those who wanted to dissuade him from his resolution, Abdulla, son of Abbas, spoke to him thus: "I remember the prediction of your grandfather who told us that your journey to Iraq would cost you your life. Hence, I think it to be my duty to advise you to shun all ideas of leaving Medina."

When Husain approached Umme Salmah, a wife of the Prophet, to bid farewell to her, she said to him: "O Son ! How can I be happy to bid you farewell, when I remember the prediction of your grandfather that you will be killed in Iraq", And Husain's characteristic and calm reply to her gives the high, divine purport behind his firm resolution from which, on no account, could he go back. He replied: "Verily, I know the day and place of my murder and the person who would accomplish it. I am fully aware of the ultimate results of my journey. There is nothing that can alter the decree of God."

And just before mounting his horse, Husain uttered these words, pregnant with deep, divine philosophy: "Such is the world that the heads of Zacharias and John the Baptist, were sent as presents to the drunkards".

Husain was advised to consult the Holy Book, the Koran, regarding his leaving Medina for Mecca. Accordingly, he opened at random a page of the Book, and the very first verse that he read was thus: "Every individual ought to relish the taste of death."

On his way to Kufa, Husain happened to meet Farazduq, the famous poet of Arabia who warned him concerning the untrustworthy nature of the Kufians and said: "The hearts of the Kufians love thee. Their tongues praise thee; but, when the time of test comes, their swords will be drawn against thy face to murder thee". To this, it was a highly sublime reply that the Imam gave, which was as follows: "You have stated the facts which I am fully aware of, God is Almighty and his powerful hand controls everything. But we praise Him both in prosperity and adversity. We are prepared to receive whatever comes from His hands."

Journeying further, Husain met another prominent person named Thirmah, from whom also he received grave warnings regarding the utter insecurity of his life at Kufa. He said: "Lest you should fall a prey to the mischief of the Kufians, I think it my duty to reveal facts to you. I assure you with a sworn statement that, if you enter Kufa, you will certainly lose your life. Nay, I think you will not be able to reach the borders, as arrangements have been made to meet you on the way and to be done with you. Hence I advise you to change your direction and proceed to Yemen, where the fortification on the hill of 'Jahal-i-Ajan will sufficiently protect you from your enemies". "By God! it is such a stronghold that we have never yielded to our strongest foes as long as we had been there. During your stay there, my tribesmen will help you to the best of their means." In spite of these stern, clear facts revealed by Thirmah, Husain's reply to him was only the confirmation of his original resolution and nothing could swerve or daunt him from his pledge to the Kufians. See his moving reply! "There has been an agreement between myself and the Kufians, that I should stay among them for their guidance in religious affairs. I think it beneath my dignity to break my pledges. If I successfully discharge my duty, I shall thank God; otherwise, I shall succeed in attaining martyrdom, God willing."

Husain, having reached, Karbala, the place of his martyrdom, said: "This is our final destination, here will our young and old be slaughtered; here will our ladies be deprived of the head coverings and apparel; here will our friends come to visit our graves; all this was predicted to me by my grandfather and his words can never be false."

Thus, from the very beginning, long before his leaving Medina for Mecca, right up to the end, he was fully informed of the inevitable tragedy, and we see how he decided to pitch his tents at Karbala, prepared to face the coming tragedy. His messenger's sad fate at Kufa moved him deeply, no doubt, and he knew the worst was in store for himself and his family.

CHAPTER XV.

Husain's Solemn Determination.

We have to pause awhile to consider in detail about Husain's solemn determination and persistence to proceed to Kufa in accordance with his promise to the Kufians, prepared for the worst, fully knowing beforehand their hopelessly fickle and feeble nature and the adverse state of affairs there. Notwithstanding his sacred pledge, he would have been thoroughly justified in cancelling his intended programme at Kufa, in as much as he was able to obtain positive proofs as to the Kufians' unworthiness to receive his spiritual message and guidance. Ordinary human nature will surely consider it unwise and unsafe not to safeguard itself from such impending dangers. But Husain overlooked everything, cause, circumstances, knowledge beforehand, and the positive final result, when he had to fulfil the supreme task of God, namely, the task of spiritualising people.

Here is the classic example of complete and unquestioned submission to Divine will, and we have seen how Husain impressed this central and fundamental aspect of his martyrdom upon all those who tried their level best to dissuade him from the disastrous course. It is worth repeating his clear and firm statement. It runs thus: "I should not like to be blamed by Allah for shrinking from the religious duty of training people to be godly and pious. If the Kufians prove disloyal and if I am killed in the discharge of my duty, my position will be much nearer God and they will be held responsible for their disloyalty and mischief."

Even when he left Medina for Mecca, he was not a little persuaded by many to stay there amidst them, one of them reminding him about the prediction of the Prophet regarding his fatal end in Iraq. His resolute reply to them was that he was prepared for the worst. Knowing fully well that death was decreed to him and his people, he was bent upon fulfilling the Divine decree.

On his way to Kufa, information after information were received by him as to the treacherous nature of the Kufians. Muslim's martyrdom, no doubt, moved him deeply. But the same iron determination was there. It was such a determined soul that we see at Karbala, with a handful of holy followers, equally determined to share with him death or even worse. His grim resolute spirit was transmitted into the hearts of all the martyrs, old and young, women and children. A mysterious mighty will, power, coupled with an unshakeable faith in God, can only explain the marvel of enduring the worst hardships not a morsel of food and not a drop of water for three days on that desert plain of scorching heat.

Undiluted devotion to God strengthened their faith. Divine faith filled their souls with Divine Spirit, and this Divine Spirit gave them that Divine Will Power. Solely nourished thus, they completely lost the ordinary cravings of flesh. A group of determined souls, armed with such a soul-force only, lived and fought against everything for three full days. And there was Husain, with that unexhaustive Divine Motor Power, radiating inspiration in all. That he was able to make the small band of martyrs equally determined like himself, ready to follow him unto death, partly explains why the martyrdom was such a grand success.

The gloomy, ominous spot, where Husain decided to camp, frightened much his sister, and she requested him to choose a more favourable place. "Destiny does not allow to go any further or to retrace our steps." See what a characteristically determined reply! Can complete and unhesitating submission to Divine decree go any further?

On that memorable night, the ninth of Muharram, every member of that holy band were strengthening their solemn resolve to die with deep prayers and devotion to Allah. The impending calamity, hunger and thirst, could not unnerve them at all. Every one was awaiting death willingly and eagerly. The iron spirit of the master permeated through and through. A sort of spiritual glow of joy was visible in every countenance. The approaching day of martyrdom was their bridal day, when they would be able to meet their Lord in Heaven. "Never may God show us the day that we survive you". This was their solemn pledge to Husain. Every one was surcharged with his resolute spirit.

All his kith and kin, including the baby infant, were sacrificed for the Holy Cause. Husain was standing at the door of his tent, weary and alone, thirsting for a drop of water. What else is needed to unnerve a man? Even at that tragic hour, he did not lose his presence of mind. He was ready, prepared and firmly resolved to offer the greatest sacrifice. He was at the lowest ebb of adversity and distress, a complete picture of misery. Did he murmur, did he complain to God

and say, "O Lord, why hast Thou forsaken me"? No, not at all. He was determined and glad to stand the worst trial. His prayer to Allah then was only his humble request to strengthen him further, so that he might boldly face the inevitable calamity. This was his prayer: "O Lord! My life is in distress and Thou art my helper in my troubles. My strength has given way and it is from Thee that I can gain strength. Thou art my Master and Bestower of all the blessings that I have enjoyed. Thou art the goal of my desires. Help me, O Thou Most Merciful! and let Thy help suffice me."

Hope, faith, optimism, presence of mind, self-control, self-abnegation, the high sense of social responsibility all these reached their Divine zenith in their unparalleled martyr, and his inexhaustible strength of will and character was fully transmitted to all his adherents. Distressed to the utmost, none despaired or felt dejected the last. All were restless and anxious only to meet the destined and glorious end. That is why it is said that before this unprecedented martyrdom, headed by Husain, even Christ's sacrifice must surely pale into insignificance. We do not see the same sort of determined attitude and willing submission to His Supreme Will in Christ or his followers. When the hour of trial came, they showed the worst weakness. Instead of standing by their Master at the worst hour of calamity, entirely unnerved and like typical cowards they looked to their safety and deserted him. The Master himself lost his presence of mind and strength of will at their desertion. He became nervous and dejected and cried in despair to God, "Why hast Thou forsaken me"? Did Husain complain to God similarly, when he was left alone and helpless, deprived of those dearest and nearest to him? On the other hand exhibiting that rare Divine optimism, he prayed to Him only for further strength and inspiration, for, He is the God who confers the highest Bliss and relieves the worst distress. The Eternal Source of all inspiration and strength. And how nobly his followers acquitted themselves! They followed him unto the end. They showed the real meaning of followers. They did not felter or fall in the middle. Such a stern, unbending stuff could not but leave behind an immortal and glorious record of martyrdom. The heroes of Karbala stand apart in their unapproached and unapproachable grandeur.

There is the perverted determination on the part of Yezid. He was resolved to wipe off completely the Prophet's holy people. His unholy and heartless resolve only all the more further strengthened Husain's and his people's worthy resolve. All his gigantic efforts came to no right; he destroyed himself by his dark determination to destroy God's people, and those good souls were crowned with eternal bliss.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Divine Decree.

We have dealt at length in a separate chapter how Husain had obtained, pretty long before the actual happening of the tragic event at Karbala, full knowledge about his inevitable martyrdom. Now that we are fairly acquainted, in all its phases, with the underlying deep purport of that sad event, and how it affected considerably the future history of Islam and humanity, we are able to perceive the subtle spiritual significance of His Divine decree. We realise how perfectly just and justifiable was His Divine purpose.

Islam, as we know, was threatened with wholesale annihilation by the Omiade ascendancy. Islam, the Prophet and his Ahlul-Bait, were only treated with supreme contempt and scorn. Pre-Islamic paganism and undiluted atheism

began to assume an upper hand. The religion, that brought round the whole of Arabia under a common brotherhood and under the worship of The One God, with its attendant highly moral and cultural principles, was slowly pushed to the background, and Arabia was soon to be again in the firm grip of its original barbarism. The only sure and successful way to set aright this piteous state of affairs was by a practical demonstration of Islamic principles through the Ahlul-Bait; that is, to show clearly of what stuff Islam and its staunch adherents were made. An indelible impression about this noble and pure religion must be implanted in the minds of people, before the dangerous poison of atheism could nullify all attempts in that direction.

Individual ideal lives, however influential, could not bring the desired effect. The best, living exponents of Islam were helpless to stem aright the unfavourable tide. The individual martyrdoms of Ali, Hasan, and many others, had no serious effect. At Medina and at Mecca, the Prophet's grandson, Husain, was a towering personality, the most beloved of all. So far as he was amidst them, Islam was safe to some extent. Omiade tyranny wanted to do away with him also. If that calamity were to come to pass, Omiade irreligiousness would spread further. Husain knew all this. He was not prepared to sell his life cheap. He was not for silent, secret and indifferent personal martyrdom. That would only repeat the sad fate of his father and that of his brother. That sort of martyrdom was as futile as the previous ones. He should not give any chance to his enemy to murder him secretly. So, he left Medina for Mecca, when he saw the risk to his life through Yezid's agents. It would be nothing short of a crime on his part to remain in such a dangerous atmosphere. That would amount to committing suicide. Yezid's agents were equally alert at Mecca. Even Mecca and its Kaba promised no safety to his life. The irreligious tyrant cared not a jot for the sanctity of the Kaba. He wanted to see the Imam murdered within its very precincts, and that too during the pilgrimage days. Better to leave Mecca immediately even without finishing the pilgrimage, rather than be responsible for the desecration of the holy place. Thus, Husain avoiding murder and silent martyrdom, abruptly left for Kufa.

In fact, he was not prepared to risk his life so cheap. He was not afraid of death at all, and no Hashimite was afraid of it. According to the Divine Decree, he was prepared for public martyrdom, along with his kith and kin. So, he started for Kufa with all his people, fully prepared for the glorious sacrifice. He, who could foresee the inevitable martyrdom, could also understand the wisdom of God who decreed it. No persuasion or dissuasion could alter his aim. Nor even the sad state of affairs at Kufa did in any way deter him from his resolute project.

Martyrdom, as decreed by God, was the only course left to him. Wherever he might be, Yezid would not spare him. It is better to die publicly, with all his kith and kin, suffering the worst, after showing to the world of what stern and sterling stuff the Ahlul-Bait were made, rather than yield to the tyrant. Here was one who, by birth or upbringing could put forward not even a shadow of claim to the Caliphate, but who somehow having usurped the position, which by right undoubtedly belonged to Husain, had the further audacity to extract allegiance from him. The unlawful claimant, the usurper, demanding allegiance from the rightful claimant. That was simply monstrous, an unpardonable mockery, adding insult to injury. How could Husain, the most virtuous, think of yielding to the most debased specimen? He rightly preferred the martyrdom according to the Divine Decree.

Husain's individual and silent martyrdom, or his allegiance to an unworthy being, would have wholly spoiled the cause of Islam. Then it would have been a cheap triumph for Yezid and atheism, and soon Islam and the Ahlul-Bait would have been cast into the depths of oblivion. To avoid that tragedy, to save and re-establish Islam on a firm footing, and to root out Yezidic poison of paganism, to root out tyranny and wickedness, the Karbala tragedy was necessary. Husain saw how it was necessary and inevitable for a higher purpose. The fate of Islam, the fate of the Prophet's people, was trembling in the balance. One false step, a slight flattering or hesitation on the part of Husain, would have eternally undone the holy cause. Husain rose to the occasion, fully aware of the great responsibility imposed upon him by God. He offered the dearest and nearest kith and kin to save the dearest thing, Islam. Those holy heroes, one and all, equally rose to the occasion. They saved Islam and rooted out Yezidic poison. The wisdom of God's decree was fully justified.

CHAPTER XVII.

Out of Evil Cometh Good.

After Moawiah's death, if affairs in the Islamic world were to take their natural and right course, Imam Husain, perhaps, would have assumed the Caliphate. It is needless to mention that such an esteemed person, worthily adorning that august position, would have shed no small lustre and glory all around; and Islam would have gained not a little on account of his strict and righteous rule. But, after all, however glorious might be his reign, he would have soon surely gone the way of his father, Ali, or that of his brother, Hasan. So far as there were enemies like Yezid, he would have been done away with either by poison or by the assassin's sword, and Yezid and his followers with unquestioned authority would have wiped off Islam, the life-long work of the Prophet, and also the Ahlul-Bait. And then Arabia would have sunk back again to its pagan and atheistic days.

In fact, we know how Husain himself was fully aware of all these facts, for, he had noted the sad end of his brother and his father, Ali, the one's voluntary retirement from the then uncongenial worldly surrounding and the other's strict adherence to Islamic principles, having proved completely futile. And ever since Yezid's assumption of the Caliphate, to remove without delay and at any cost, whatever might be the consequences, the great obstacle, Imam Husain, from his way, was his foremost consideration. The Imam understood this. He left Medina for Mecca, but even the very holy precincts of the Kaba, where bloodshed is forbidden, did not prove a safe place for him. The tyrant's agents were instructed to fall upon him during the pilgrimage days. The wicked one had neither respect for the holiest spot Kaba, nor for the holy pilgrimage days, nor for that saintly personality. Husain thought it best to leave Mecca too for good, and he did not wish that he should be the cause for desecrating the holy place with foul murder. That was why he did not even wait to finish his pilgrimage.

Evil forces drove him from one place to another. We have seen how his journey to Kufa sadly terminated at Karbala. The inevitable tug-of-war between good and bad, right and wrong, virtue and vice was to take place here. Man, in his worst aspect, was taking to the extreme, man, in his noblest nature. A few holy angels were surrounded by innumerable devils. Water was denied even to innocent and tender ones. What to say of three days' starvation and thirst on a desert plain under the scorching heat! Can wickedness and heartlessness go any

farther? And after all, did the wicked succeed? The more those good ones were tried in the ordeal of heart-rending afflictions and sufferings, the more brightly glowed their noble nature, fortitude, patience, self-control and faith unshakeable. Martyrdom raised them to the sublime heights, and they won everlasting name and glory. Ultimately good was the result of all the evil designs of Yezid. Wickedness was disgraced and crushed. It was decreed by God that Islam should be regenerated and rejuvenated through Husain's unique martyrdom. Such a martyrdom alone would go deep into the hearts of men, showing practically that Islam stood for very high principles. The grand martyrdom gave a decided check to baseless materialism and the dangerously expending atheism. It was to turn the sweeping tide to the proper channel, that God decreed the martyrdom of Husain with his kith and kin. Everything happens for the best. Lasting good for humanity was the outcome of this marvellous martyrdom. Yezid's attempts were completely frustrated. His wickedness brought out the noblest nature in man. His wickedness brought about the martyrdom. The wicked were punished. The holy souls were immortalised.

Good actions and good thoughts are never lost. The actions of the good "smell sweet and blossom in the dust." Really out of the dust of Karbala, mixed up with the purest blood of those peerless martyrs, rose Islam, immortalised, revitalised and reborn, like a fresh blossom, waiting its holy fragrance beyond space and time. The best, the noblest, the sublimest these were forced to clash against the worst, the most worthless and wicked. Who succeeded, good or evil? The answer is evident. Evil forces became more hedious, ghastly and ghostly. And Good actions, sublime thoughts and noble nature made resplendant manifold, were unshakeably enthroned in the hearts of millions. Husain's good martyrdom destroyed outright everything Yezidic and satanic. Wickedness, wishing to destroy good, wrought its own destruction, and Islam, with its Divine principles and ethics, came out triumphant.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some Reflections Quoted.

"The story of Karbala will ring through the ages until the sun-set of time. Not until this planet cools will fervent souls cease to whisper the events of this memorable field. He, who had sat upon the knee of Muhammad, (May the choicest blessings of Allah be with him and those of his house!), whose baby lips had lisped the sacred tongue of the Final Revelation of Allah to humanity, who had grown like a sapling in the warmth of the sun of the Prophetic care, whose appearance brought a smile to the countenance of Allah's Apostle, he it was who was destined to cement Islam with his own warm life-blood. Shed your tears, ye Muslims, as ye tell your children the story of Husain, the Ever Blessed Saint and Martyr. Teach them to live as he did, and be prepared to die even as he. Muharram, to those who have penetrated the inner veil, means much, and to the uninitiated, it also means a great deal. Let us then, learned and ignorant, gather together to pay our humble tribute to Husain, the Blessed, whose for evermore".

"It has been rightly said that the blood of the martyr is the seed of the new life." The martyrdom of Husain which Yezid considered to be an easy job and in which he easily succeeded, was not of momentary effect or fleeting consequences. It arrested the growth of the depravity which

depraved morals of the Omiades had introduced into Islam. It set the Islamic world to think, ponder, and consider furiously."

"The tragedy of Karbala has left its indelible marks on the course of human history. Its influence upon Muslim history and civilisation has been deep and far-reaching. The destruction of Omiade heresy and irreligion by the Abbasides and Fatimites, owed its inspiration to the tragedy of Karbala; the impetus for healthy reforms, and purer modes of life, which sprang up in Islam from time to time, came from the same source in fact, the deliverance of Islam from the thralldom of Heathenism and vice was due mainly to the influences which radiated from Karbala. Lastly, the Imams, who were the descendants of Husain and who earnestly cultivated religion and philosophy, made large contributions to Islamic culture, and it reacted powerfully upon the civilisation of mankind, both in the East and in the West. Truly, therefore, has the blood of the martyr cemented the bonds of cultural fellowship between man and man, an achievement, which is as rare, as it is glorious."

"There was no question of life and death, but the real issue was the attainment of the life-purpose. If the death of Husain had brought success to the aim of Yezid the result must have been in his favour. If the murder of Husain would have meant the overthrow of Islam, we must have called Yezid, the Victor. But what we see? Husain is no more, but the fire he had lit is still burning with the same glow. He had defended Islam nobly, heroically and successfully. Yezid had done all to kill Husain and few others, but he could not kill the cause for which Husain stood. The real success was for Husain, for, he attained his ideal."

The tragedy of Karbala is the eternal tragedy of humanity, fighting and laying its life for an ideal, and it has all the glory and all the pathos of a Christ kissing the Cross, and a Socrates drinking the cup of poison.....Here are 72 bodies, fighting and dying like Homeric heroes for an ideal a definite set of values, thus teaching, once for all, the true spiritual significance of sacrifice. They did not submit to evil meekly and tamely. They were too much of Men to do so. Hungry and thirsty, they sold their blood very dearly. They did not seek martyrdom for its own glorification. Their perspective was long. They sought it as a means to an End. They did not hug a shadow for reality.

"There is, of course, the physical suffering in martyrdom, and all sorrow and suffering claim our sympathy, the dearest, purest, most out-flowing sympathy, that we can give. But there is a greater suffering than physical suffering. That is when a valiant soul seems to stand against the world; when the noblest motives are reviled and mocked; when truth seems to suffer an eclipse. But truth, after all, can never die. That is perfectly true. Abstract truth, after all, can never die. It is independent of men's cognition. But the whole battle is for man's keeping hold of truth and righteousness. And that can only be done by the highest examples of man's conduct."

"It should be remembered that Husain fought for the traditions, institutions and ideals of the Prophet, (Peace be on his soul). The struggle, therefore, was really a struggle for the existance of the essential ingredients of the social efficiency. The operation of a basic principle of sociology was thus in evidence or, again, he fought for the preservation of the Islamic Spirit, which consists rather in the wholesome human conduct than in the numerical strength of the society. Therefore, it is not at all strange that, although Husain and his devoted followers perished in the struggle, the success was still theirs."

"We are almost at our wit's end when we are face to face with certain phenomena of Karbala, which appear to defy all attempts at explanation. The calamities which befell Husain and his companions were all of a serious kind. But one or two of them were of such a nature as would cause human blood to freeze. It cannot be even imagined how, for instance, they could bear the pangs of the extremest appetite and thirst, enduring continuously for three days in the intense heat of scorching sun. Nor were the little infants immune from it."

"All the tragedies of the universe pale into insignificance by the side of the tragedy of Karbala, whose details of ruthless massacre, spoliation and destruction, wrought by these hateful oppressors, would be incredible, were they not confirmed from so many different quarters. The unscrupulous perfidy of the invaders and their cold-blooded cruelty put gall into the festering wounds of humanity, and added insult to injury. These barbarous people, on account of their ruthless activities, left behind a legacy of hatred and abhorrence, and their surpassing cruelty made them the focus of full-throated condemnation. The disastrous issue was precipitated and accentuated by their greed, treachery and perfidy and irrespective of caste and religion, the whole world joins the chorus of hatred. Their religion was nothing but the greed of gold, their cult was nothing but sensual gratifications and carnal desires, their caste was nothing but the destruction of the high and noble ideals of humanity."

The tragedy of Karbala gave a rude shock to his (Yezid's) supreme sovereignty and a staggering blow to his undivided sway. It brought to light the act of usurpation, and the people who had been in darkness realised the real situation, and deemed the act of usurpation as a momental mockery. They had been misled that there was none in the family by the Prophet but the same usurper."

Had Husain not revolutioned the world by his martyrdom, had the inspiring story of the tragedy of Karbala not travelled all over the Muslim world, and had he not by his sacrifice filled a fresh blood in the veins of Islam, it would have never been found existing even in the present state in the world. It would have been extinct, then and there, and the opponents of Islam would have been successful in reviving their own old faith.

"Gave his head, but not hand in the hands of Yezid,

Verily, Husain is the foundation of Islam."

"In fact, the tragedy of Husain is in one sense the tragedy of Yezid. It shows us a master of inequity, a thoroughly bad man, who is at last tempted to let loose the forces of evil within him, and is wrecked altogether. The murder of Husain is, in fact, the destruction of Yezid; Islam is re-animated after every Karbala."

"Husain sacrificed his life, but did not surrender to Yezid. In truth, the basis of Islam is the personality of Husain."

"For the sake of Truth, he has rolled up in dust and blood; thus he has laid the foundation of Islam."

"From Husain we have learnt the secret of the Quran; we have lighted up the flames (of Life) from his fire."

"Through the Karbala tragedy, the human spirit embarks on a voyage of adventure, acquires a new culture and serves as a prime factor to lengthen the scroll of humanity's triumphs."

"In a distant age and climate, the tragic scene of the death of Husain will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader".

"The tragical fate of Husain and his children sent a thrill of horror through Islam; and the revulsion of feeling which it caused proved eventually the salvation of the faith. It arrested the current of depravity which flowed from the Ommeyyade Court of Damascus. It made the bulk of Muslims think of what the master had done, and of the injuries which the children of his enemies were inflicting on Islam".

"Let every Muslim, and especially the Muslim youth, learn lessons of service and sacrifice from the Martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Husain in the field of Karbala, and endeavour their utmost to restore the glory and vitality of Islam to its origin in height, and thus make Islam be respected and followed as in the days of the past. What better homage can be paid to the Imam and other martyrs than imbibe the spirit of service and sacrifice! What source of inspiration can be better than that provided by the heroic deeds and sufferings borne by the martyrs on the field of Karbala! What indeed can be greater and more glorious than that of endeavouring for the greatness of Islam, and also of rendering service to country and humanity, which Islam very strongly and emphatically preaches!"

"No person can describe with full justice the deeds on seventy-two brave heroes against a twenty-thousand of the enemy. No brain can imagine the least of the tortures that these may have suffered. All combatants could be surrounded by the enemy from four sides, but these had the enemy on eight sides, the scorching sun above, the burning sand below, and hunger and thirst within."

CHAPTER XIX.

Islam and Martyrdom.

Husain's martyrdom gave a new birth and life to Islam and its culture. The world was thus saved from a heavy loss. But this grand martyrdom, which rebuilt afresh God's religion, naturally must remind us that the very birth and growth of this faith, during the life of the Holy Prophet, (Peace of Allah be ever upon him) was through martyrdom. Many of the Prophet's followers at the beginning were ordinary people, mere slaves. For accepting the worship of the One God, and for no other crime, these humble followers were forced to lie on the burning sand, and their chests were choked and broken with heavy stones. They were mercilessly flogged, until blood came out profusely. Though thus bruised, broken and bled, they did not give up the Prophet's and Allah's cause, but died, gladly suffering untold tortures and praising Him till the last moment. But for such faithful followers, the infant faith of the Prophet would have been strangled to death.

Gradually, the Prophet was able to attract adherents to his creed from the higher class. Many members from noble families joined him. Noble or otherwise none were spared from tortures. The father used to flog his own son without the least mercy, if the latter happened to be on the side of the Prophet. It was a heart-rending sight for the Apostle to see his faithful people so callously treated. To save them and the infant faith, he advised them to migrate to Abyssinia and other neighbouring places.

Mecca became too hot for the Prophet. All attempts to make him renounce his new faith having proved futile, his enemies wanted to put an end to him by the

sword, for, his new religion was causing such a disturbance. To save Islam and himself, he fled from Mecca to Medina. There also the enemies pursued him. In the battles that he fought to defend Islam many of his followers were killed. Ever since he propounded his faith, he had known no peace of mind. His whole life was a sacrifice in the Cause of Allah. At last, his efforts were crowned with success. He returned to Mecca triumphant. Mecca, without a murmur, welcomed him and his faith. It was the willing martyrdom of many that brought about the final success. These martyrs were the pillars of Islam.

Sacrifice has built up Islam. The marvellous life and career of the Holy Prophet was itself a complete surrender and sacrifice in His Cause. Even at the height of his power, when he could command anything and everything, he led the simplest and the most abstemious life. Sacrifice is the very essence of Islam. One should sacrifice for the sake of the higher life, time, money, comforts, etc. Islamic prayers, fasting, poor-rate and pilgrimages, teach these various types of sacrifice.

The great edifice of Islam, so built up and cemented by the holy blood of many martyrs, and breathing the very spirit of that master-mind, was threatened with down-right destruction after the demise of such a great personality. With Yezid's ascendancy to power the position of Islam and that of the Prophet's people reached a delicate stage. Irreligious and immoral to the very core, the tyrant had neither respect for God, nor for the Quran, nor for the best interpreters of that Holy Book, and the Ahlul-Bait. He wanted to make a clean sweep of everything. To yield to him was highly suicidal. So, Husain and his people were driven to the only course, martyrdom, wisely decreed by God, to save the honour of Islam and that of the Prophet's house, and to destroy and punish the wicked. Islam, built up by the martyrdom, was firmly re-established in all its glory by the grandest martyrdom. Islam was having a transitional, trying stage during the days of the Omiades. Husain's martyrdom perfected and purified it thoroughly. It had its final purification in the blood of Karbala's martyrs.

It would seem the Holy Prophet was miraculously exempted from martyrdom. This was also undoubtedly Allah's Will. His Divine hand saved him from all attempts at murdering him. On the night of his fleeing from Mecca to Medina, his enemies, with swords in hands, had surrounded his house, resolved to fall upon him when he would be coming out to go to the mosque for the early morning prayer. Asking Ali, his son-in-law, to take his place in his bed, he made his narrow escape, rushing past the very enemies there. God threw dust in their eyes, and they could not, therefore, see the Prophet escaping their very eyes. Due to his presence of mind and due to Allah's aid, Ali also made good his escape from the angry clutches of the enemies. The Prophet, hiding in the cave with his ally, Abu Bakr, had a narrow escape from there too, God was with them, and one of the foes desperately hunting out for him, and having almost rightly scented the very spot of their refuge, somehow left them, without pushing on the search a little more.

At Medina, many attempts were made at his life, and a Jewish woman actually poisoned him, which by the grace of Allah, did not prove fatal. In the many wars he fought against the Meccans, he escaped murder, though many of his staunch adherents, ever alert to protect his precious life, were killed one after another. After seeing with his own eyes, the full fruition of his life-long work in the Cause of Allah, he had a natural and peaceful end at a ripe old age.

Martyrdom would have then marred the dignity of his Prophet-hood, and a up-hill work would have suffered much, if martyrdom fell on him.

Strenuous and continuous was the task of the Apostle in building up the grand edifice of Islam. He had to work at it throughout his life, till the very last moment. Martyrdom would have considerably upset God's programme that was to be carried out through his Apostle. Afterwards due to the adverse state of affairs, Arabia needed a very severe lesson to bring her round once more to Islamic ways. Islam needed further perfection and purification, so that it might be installed afresh permanently and firmly. Hence, there came the Supreme necessity for Husain's matchless martyrdom.

CHAPTER XX.

Islam Versus Paganism.

The Meccans, headed by Abu Sufiyan, the arch-enemy of Islam and the high-priest of Paganism, fought their utmost against Islam and its founder. Notwithstanding their herculean efforts, the religion of God scored ultimately a decided success. Yet, the dangerous element, feeble and foiled, was still lurking and living. It had not received the crushing death blow.

So, after the Prophet's demise, the serpent again began to raise its head aloft. The time-honoured Omiade animosity to Islam, started by Abu Sufiyan, was naturally handed down to his son, Moawiah. With all his treachery and irreligiousness, Moawiah put on at last a show of respect for Islam and the Prophet's people. But his son, Yezid, proved to be a devil incarnate, out and out. He was the worst product of the Omiades; Abu Sufiyan, Moawiah, and a host of others of that type, were rolled up into one in him. During his Caliphate, Paganism and Omiade animosity reached their most tragic climax. Yezid the Caliph: What an irony! Can mockery of religion go any further?

"It is no denying the fact that Yezid was a custodian of vices, an embodiment of perfidy, and an incarnation of treachery and diplomacy. Wine and women summed up his whole life, and in fact, he was a devil incarnate. His domination awfully changed the ethical atmosphere and dark clouds began to gather on the moral horizon. His noxious activities badly affected the character of the masses of Arabia, and a curtain was dropped on the sound activities of the people. Arabia presented a very ugly picture, full of darkness and forebodings. Morality became a history of the past, debauchery was in full swing, and dishonest dealings ate into the very vitals of Arabia the home of the Prophet and the nursery of Islamic activities....Yezid wanted to give a practical shape to his malicious designs and re-terminate the whole family of the Prophet which was an eye-sore to him.

Following the wise counsel of the Prophet and the inward voice of God, Ali, Hasan and Husain kept aloof and quiet from the chaotic state of affairs, so that the situation may not be made worse. Knowing fully well how this rightful and unquestionable claims to the Caliphate were deliberately overlooked, they thought it premature and even inadvisable to launch into any serious crusade against the prevailing injustice and irreligiousness, for, that way, they might bring eternal harm to themselves and the dearest thing, Islam. They were satisfied with doing their humble bit for Islam in a silent and patient manner, without worrying themselves about their rightful claim to the Caliphs, and they who saved Osman from popular indignation. Caliphate was thrust upon Ali, he was dragged into wars, and finally, he was assassinated. Hasan's

preference of complete retirement and aloofness to the Caliphate, was of no use for he was done away with poison. Many innocent souls were thus, by poison or sword, silently removed from the path. Hearing the death of Hasan, it is said that Moawiah exclaimed: 'Allaho-Akbar'. Husain strongly protested against this wicked attitude of Moawiah. He clearly saw the growing menace to Islam and its immediate supporters at the hands of paganism and Omiade hatred. With Yezid's ascendancy to power, affairs grew worse, as we have noted.

Enough harm had already been done to Islam. Passive and noble non-interference and non-resistance could not solve the problem. Husain must act, and must assert. Islam must rise to its full height and must assert its spirituality and vitality. Yezid with his dark paganism, was out to annihilate Islam and the whole family of the Prophet. He, the usurper demanded from the rightful claimant, Husain, immediate and unconditional allegiance to him. That is a great insult not only to him, but to Islam itself. Paganism was trying to have an upperhand over the religion of God. Further hesitation and delay would bring eternal ruin to his family and religion. Here was the tyrant's challenge to Islam. The challenge must be answered. Husain was not prepared to bow down before the devil and his paganism. He was prepared to face the worst consequence. But if he had remained at Medina, and afterwards, even at Mecca, following the persuasion of his well-wishers, if he had not abruptly, without completing the pilgrimage, started for Kufa, with all his kith and kin, his grand plan would have been thoroughly upset; for, the tyrant would have succeeded in seeing that he was murdered in the usual, silent way.

The canker and poison of Paganism, sapping the very life-blood of Arabia, would have effaced Islam from the face of the earth, but for Husain's martyrdom. The impending catastrophe struck deep and to the quick Husain's heart. He placed his all, seventy-two precious souls at the altar of Truth and Righteousness. Paganism, trying to kill Islam, was itself given, at last, the well-merited fatal blow. The heroic deaths of the martyrs tolled the death-knell of Paganism, but gave a new birth and beauty to the religion of God.

CHAPTER XXI.

*The Philosophy of Suffering.

The Karbala tragedy has given the best solution and answer to the most intricate problem in life. Why do the good and innocent invariably suffer in life? Why was Husain and his people, with all their boundless devotion to God, subjected to inconcievable sufferings, that reached their culminating point in their cold-blooded murders by callous tyrants? Had they not the best right to enjoy the wholesome pleasures of life? The direct answer is, that they had to suffer the worst and sacrifice the most, so that the worthiest ideal and Allah's Cause, Islam, the dearest thing in life, may be saved for ever from the foul and fatal clutches of the Devil. To realise this supreme purpose, inevitable were those sufferings and martyrdoms, as wisely pointed out in the Divine Decree.

And certainly, the law of compensation must work. The good ones, having suffered the worst for the holiest cause, were awarded with Eternal Bliss in Paradise. The Prophet was there with the heavenly cup to quench their thirst for ever. Said Husain to his supporters: 'Lift up your eyes and behold! The doors of Paradise are open for you. Its palaces have been tastefully decorated. My

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Article contributed by the author of this*

friends who have just perished, are in the company of the Holy Prophet and my father Ali. These and the angels are restlessly waiting to receive you." Even such of those who have not the patience to believe in this sort of glorious life after death for such good and suffering souls, can at least believe the actual, far reaching results of the glorious martyrdom as recorded in history. Even that way, we see how the martyrs have earned eternal glory and fame in this world for their worthy and willing sacrifice. As the saviours of Islam, they will be remembered till the end of time. In their memory, thousands of Muharram celebrations have taken place in the past and still thousands and thousands of such celebrations are in store. By their sufferings, they have brought lasting honour to the Prophet, his family, and his religion.

Look at the Prophet's life ! It is nothing but a series of sufferings, hardships, and trials, cheerfully and willingly borne in the cause of Allah. Did not the enemies tempt him strongly with all the worldly pleasures? And even when a time came when he could command anything, did he not choose to lead the humblest life, of a typically self-denying nature? High life-purposes and ideals cannot be achieved without suffering. The higher the ideal, the severer the struggle. Only the good ones, who can alone realise the ultimate goal, can be the chosen ones of God for such purposes, and He surely knows how to reward them in the best way. The path of true greatness is not paved with ease and pleasure. Neither the Prophet, nor his worthy adherents, Husain and his immortal band, ever dreamt of selling their too precious souls to the Devil. The tinsels and toys of life, its worthless transitory pleasures, could not move them a bit. What is the use of gaining the whole world by losing one's own soul ? That was their sublime attitude towards life. People with such high conscience in them, following the voice of God, embrace all hardships willingly. In the attainment of the higher life, all sufferings are its golden steps.

❧ Husain's martyrdom has solved for us the acute problems of life. He and his martyrs are a perennial source of inspiration and never-failing consolation. Compared to those martyrs' ordeals and distress, our petty difficulties and calamities ought to dwindle into insignificance. They have considerably mitigated our sufferings, clearing the thorny path not a little. Such soothing lessons and thoughts about their sacred sacrifices ought to go deep into our hearts. Let us try to cultivate in our humble way, those virtues of patience, fortitude, self-control, and that firm faith in Him, which is the result of our complete surrender to His Supreme Will.

In fact, peace and a healthy harmony in life, despite taxing calamities, can only be evolved from the fundamental belief that Allah sees, regulates and controls everything. The foremost Islamic attributes of God, "The Beneficent, The Merciful," have the deepest significance behind them. His guiding Hand takes us safe through the darkest alleys of life. What was it that so marvellously sustained those holy band at Karbala? Verily, the Spirit of God, undiluted devotion and faith in Him. What a solemn serenity, what a spiritual Bliss, pervaded in that holy camp on that memorable night, though surrounded by the beastly besiegers all around, making a hell of noise, a regular pandemonium ! What a sharp contrast, and what a great lesson to us ! Notwithstanding three days' hunger and thirst, how courageously and calmly they faced the foes and the inevitable end !

Life is a mysterious mixture of pleasure and pain. Sufferings and sorrows are the bodyguards of happiness. Let us take calmly and meekly and in good faith, all trials and tribulations, facing them manly, supported by the never-failing faith in Him. Islam's attitude towards life is bold and broad, practical and ideal. It does not advocate renunciation, asceticism and monasticism; for such systematised institutions go against the very nature of man. But then, it has not failed to

embody in its codes the laudable spirit underlying these institutions. According to Islamic principles and practices, one living in the very midst of the worldly surroundings, can at the same time be in a state of complete detachment. One can work out the higher purpose of life, and can lead the most virtuous life, if he follows those golden rules of conduct. Islamic prayers, fastings, alms-giving, and pilgrimages, inculcates in a true Muslim the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial. His life is a series of sacrifices towards the higher life, and no amount of sacrifice is too much for him in the Cause of Allah. The ideal life of the Prophet and that of his grandson, Husain, are perfect and true mirrors of Quranic teachings. Struggling and persevering in the very midst of worldly surroundings, they upheld the cause of Truth and Righteousness against wickedness and vice, boldly facing all hardships. Did not Islamic optimism reach its sublime heights in those martyrs of Karbala, when they so courageously and calmly welcomed the inevitable?

Islam's view of death is equally characteristic. It teaches one how to face death peacefully and without fear. Death lays its icy hand on all. It is a phenomenon, natural and inevitable. All created things must return to their original source. "From Him we came, and to Him we return." See how Karbala's martyrs teach us how to face this inevitable end! Says Husain, consoling Zainub thus: "Death is decreed for all; those in Heaven as well as those on earth must one day suffer death; it is only God that is immortal; it is He alone that commandeth and to Him shall everything return. My father and grandfather were better than me and yet died and every Moslem has to follow their footsteps." Indeed, those martyrs awaited the impending doom with a peculiar, spiritual thrill. "As the time of their returning to the Creator was approaching fast, their restlessness in expectation of the particular hour developed with incalculable speed. Instead of the worldly bread and water that were denied to them, they nourished their souls with tears and prayers, and their devoted prayers and supplication guided and landed them just at the fountain of life. They were waiting for their decreed time to plunge into the fountain, to be drowned in it, and be metamorphosed into eternal life." "Do you think to terrify me with death?" was the undaunted challenging interrogation from Husain to Yazid's lieutenant, when he was threatened with the worst consequence, in case of his non-submission to the tyrant. Even a child of the Hashimite family was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of fearlessness. Did not the Imam's nephew, only eleven years old, tell his uncle that he liked death "sweeter than honey?"

Islam does not preclude any one from enjoying the good things of life, while it rightly denounces all vices, drinking, gambling debauchery, etc., the enemies that block the path to a higher, virtuous life. It does not advocate the gloomy, calvinistic, or Buddhist view of life, nor does it agree with the Hindu philosophy that preaches about the unreality of everything. Life is real, life is earnest; it is worth struggling to lead a good life. Ofcourse, there is a better world, where the good and suffering live in Eternal Bliss. This is what Islam teaches.

We see how the wicked ones, the heartless murderers of Husain and his people, were most ruthlessly dealt with. The mill-stone of God grinds slow, but sure. "Murder will be out" is a common expression, and it is our common experience that the wicked cannot escape punishment in the long run.

Through suffering, Virtue and Islam triumphed for ever, and wickedness was punished by its own dark and overwhelming forces: "Let the troubled and care-worn world look to Husain for consolation in misfortunes and redemption from sins. Accept love, and make Husain your life's ideal, for, he has deprived, for you, the world's misfortunes, of its poignancy. However adverse may be the circumstances Husain will keep your mind, cool and calm. He will give you courage to laugh at your sorrows. Following whatever creed, faith, or religion

you like best, you can, however, make Hussain your ideal counselor, at least when you are passing through any ordeal.

Sufferings have glorified and beautified life, physically, intellectually, mentally, and spiritually. Nay, they have beautified the whole world. Out of the tears of Shah Jahan rose that marble marvel, Taj. The deepest thoughts have welled up from saddest events. To make life better, Christ and Buddha embraced a life of suffering. But for Hussain, the prince of martyrs, human culture and civilization would have sustained an irreparable loss. Eternal glory to Karbala's martyrs! May Allah's choicest blessings be ever with them!

CHAPTER XXII.

Conclusion.

Centuries have passed and prodigious and momentous events have taken place in world's history during these long intervals. Nations after nations rose and fell. Mighty royalties, with all their temporal dignity and grace, came into existence and then became extinct. Many a sceptre and crown thus tumbled down, passing into the region of complete oblivion. Many a black chapter of history chronicles but disgusting and distressing wars and feuds, marring and barring man's real progress towards the higher ideal. And in the name of religion and State, tons of precious human blood was spilt. Man, considered the noblest of Allah's creations has not hesitated to commit the most heinous and heinous crimes, filling this earth, a charming paradise, with his oppression, desecration, hatred, and what not? The sun, the standing witness of all ages, and the stars, the beaming beacons of dark nights, have been the solemn and silent spectators of all these tragic dramas enacted by mankind. Ah! What all kinds of outrageous deeds, exhibiting the beast in man in its worst aspect, have darkened those numerous pages of history! How many of His humble followers were forced to become a prey to the relentless and bloody sabre of oppression and tyranny! How many such innocent were hanged or put to death, after subjecting them to prolonged and taxing tortures! If a fresh enquiry is held into all such perpetrations of the past, every inch of the sky above shall bear witness to this effect, and every particle of the earth's surface shall appear to be weeping over the helplessness of human being. All these have happened, and will ever be happening - manifestation of man's sheer helplessness on one side, and the exhibition of his heartless and ferocity on the other. This sort of helplessness on one side and heartlessness on the other, reached their typical climax at Karbala. The heart - freezing tragedy that was enacted on the bank of the Euphrates is a long tale of blood without a precedence in world's history.

My God! that barren desert of Karbala, with the scorching and choking heat of the sun's rays! On one head, all false forces of oppression, cruelty, and beastly tyranny were concentrated and personified in Yezid. Hussain and his small band of holy followers represented in the best form those virtues of love, self-sacrifice, patience, fortitude, and complete submission to Divine Will. Blind vanity and base and baseless autocracy sternly demanded that Truth and Righteousness should stoop down to wicked material might and power. Tyranny, backed by sheer material power and resources, tried its utmost to strangle to death the Divine spirit and Virtues in man, trifling with religion and God, and setting at naught those high ethical principles. Unwarranted and self-imposed authority, with its might and wickedness, wanted to reign Supreme. Vice and wickedness, with its numerous adherents, wanted to overpower the small band of God's people who stood by virtue and righteousness through thick and thin. It was a life and death struggle for Hussain and his party. Only death and martyrdom could yield victory and lasting glory. There

was no question of hesitation or yielding. Every head that was lifted in supporting Right, could find no way to bend before tyranny and oppression; it may be smashed or beheaded, and it was ever ready for that sort of bold sacrifice. That neck, through which a voice for freedom and true democracy was raised, was restless and anxious to quench its three days' thirst with its own holy blood, flowing from the sabre of undiluted oppression. And that hand, which raised the standard of Truth, on behalf of the oppressed and innocent, could never go into the unholy hands of the oppressor for an abject pledge of slavish obedience. It was nothing short of selling one's own soul and conscience to the Devil. Many yielded to the irresistible temptation, but Husain and his people—never, never. The invincible and immortal spirit decidedly triumphed over the so-called might of materialism and rank atheism. Islam was placed thenceforth on an unshakeable foundation. We can now very well understand why Husain's unique martyrdom was something unavoidable and inevitable, decreed by Divine Will. Eternal glory be to God's martyrs! The cry of "Ya Husain" has rung through ages, and will undoubtedly ring through ages to come. Truly, "there is not a single celebration so grand and appealing as the commemoration of Husain's martyrdom".

We always see the hearts of the world of Islam throughout becoming dejected and melancholy during the first ten days of the month of Muharrum. And everywhere, in commemoration of the martyrdom of this faithful leader, millions shed tears in accompaniment with lamentations and recitations of elegies, thus exhibiting universal annual condolence and displaying their genuine sympathy towards the unequalled afflictions of the Hero of Karbala. But how many hearts are there, in fact, which having learnt again and again this saddest tale of harrowing horrors, feel moved to their very depths, and how many eyes are there, whose tears on such occasions have flown deep into innermost recesses of the mourners' hearts, cleanly washing all impurities? This is real mourning, the deep purport and purpose of that grand martyrdom.

Brethren - in - Islam! Are not right and wrong still at war with each other, despite the boasted evolution of men towards a higher civilisation and culture? And the millennium of a world peace does not seem to have even a tolerable chance some where in the near future. The beast and the devil in man are still pre-dominant, and there are any number of Yezids and Shimars. But the darkest cloud has its silver lining. God's good earth will always have a good share of his holy persons to guide mankind through the right path. One Husain was enough to illuminate the whole world, and he is still spreading light, life and culture everywhere. He resisted evil, wickedness, autocracy and rank irreligiosity with an iron will, sacrificed his sacred life, to uphold Virtue, but never surrendered to Yezid, the devil incarnate. Let us similarly as true Muslims, try to imbibe that immortal spiritual strength from that matchless martyr, endeavouring our level best to resist evil, even at a heavy sacrifice of our lives. According to Islamic principles of conduct, to be indifferent, neutral, or passive, is in itself a crime. Islam, the religion of peace is a vital religion, and so does not advocate that sort of lifeless peace through non-resistance. While it rightly denounces aggression, true to its fundamental principle of peace, it cannot allow evil and wickedness to roam at large. So, let us all uphold Virtue by sternly resisting evil. This is the true and ultimate way to peace. Islam stands for this sort of peace. Husain's life is a thoroughly practical demonstration of such sound principles of conduct. Let us all humbly try to faithfully follow his ideal guide. This is the best way to remember his martyrdom, the very best way to pay our humble homage to our peerless Saint. Husain! Thou conqueror of million hearts! May the choicest blessings of Allah be ever upon you! May guide us through the darkest of difficulties!

The following is the list of the officers of Yazid's army with the number they commanded:—

S. No.	Officers' Name.	Number Commanded.
1	Omar Ibn Saad, son of Waqqas.	4,000 Cavalry.
2	Ibn Naufil.	1,000
3	Abi Qadr Bahili.	9,000
4	Awar Aslami.	4,000 " To blockade the passage to the Euphrates.
5	Dured, slave to Omar Saad.	Flag bearer.
6	Shimr, son of Ziljaushan.	Commanded the left flank.
7	Sheesh, son of Rabai.	4,000 Cavalry.
8	Amir, son of Sarima-i-Teemi.	6,000 "
9	Abdul Rahman, son of Busra-i-Jofi.	Acted as a spy.
10	Urwa, son of Qais Ahmasi	A cavalry officer.
11	Zubedi	500 Cavalry, guarded the Euphrates.
12	Mohkam, son of Tufel.	2,000 Cavalry.
13	Omar, son of Hajjai	Commanded the right flank.
14	Tariq, son of Abi Zibyan.	Escorted the prisoners and took the heads of the martyrs from Kufah to Syria.
15	Zubyr, son of Qais.	Do.
16	Bishr, son of Malik.	Do.
17	Abu Barda, son of Auf Azadi.	Do.
18	Khuli, son of Yazid Asbahi.	Set the head of Iman Husain on the spear point.
19	Hur, son of Yazid Riyashi.	Commanded one thousand cavalry and checked Husain in his march to-wards Kufah, but eventually sacrificed his life for the Imam.
20	Hajar, son of Abhur.	4,000 Cavalry.
21	Ishac, son of Hashwa.	2,000 "
22	Azraq Shami.	400 Guarded the Euphrates.

There is a great divergence of opinion with regard to the names and number of the martyrs of Karbala. Seventy-two is the well-known number; but 84 names are given below in accordance with the generality of opinion. The night preceding the 10th of Muharram was entirely devoted by Imam Husain to prayer and communion with God. The battle commenced soon after the morning prayer on the 10th of Muharram. Husain's baby aged 6 months too was dead. Shimr ended the life of Imam Husain, and cutting off his head set it on the spear point. Husain's tents were set on fire and thus ruthlessly were butchered the descendants of the Prophet. The list of the martyrs of Karbala is as follows :—

S. No.	Name.	Father's Name.	Slayer's Name.
1	Imam Husain	Ali	Shimar Ibne Ziljaushan, Zabbabi
2	Ali Akbar	Imam Husain	1 Murra Bine Munqiz Bine Nauman Abdi
3	Ali Asghar	Do.	2 Hasin Ibne Namir
4	Abdullah	Ali	Hurmula Bine Kahil Asadi
5	Abul Fazlil Abbas	Do.	Hani Ibne Subet-i-Hizrami
			1 Yazid Ibne Waqqar Johanni
6	Jafar	Do.	2 Hakim Ibne Tufail Tai
7	Osman	Do.	Hani Ibne Subet-i-Hizrami
			Khuli Ibne Yazid Asbahi
8	Mohammad	Do.	Iadi Ibani Darimi
9	Abu Bakr	Imam-Hasan	Iadi Darimi
10	Abdullah	Do.	Abdulla Ibne Aqbai Ghunvi
11	Qasim	Do.	Hurmula Bine Kahil Asadi
			Omar Ibne Saad Bine Orwa Bine Nufail Azadi
12	Aun	Abdullah Ibne Jafar Tayyar	Abdulla Bine Qutba Bin Hani
13	Jafar	Aqeel	Bishr Ibne Khut Hamadani
14	Mohammad	Abdullah Ibne Jafar Tayyar	Amir Ibne Sahle Tamimi
15	Abdur Rahman	Aqeel	Omar Ibne Sabih-i-Saidavi
16	Abi Abdullah	Muslim Ibne Aqeel	
17	Mohammed	Abu Said Ibne Aqeel	Luqit Ibne Nashir Johanni
18	Sulaiman	Slave to Imam Husain	Not known
19	Munjah	Do.	" "
20	Muslim	Ausaja-i-Asadi.	1 "Abdullah Zabbabi
			2 Abdullah Bine Khashkara-i-Bijli
21	Saad	Abdullah Hanafi	Not Known
22	Bishr	Omar Ibne Hizrami	"
23	Ali Yazid	Hasin Hamadani	"
24	Omar	Kaab Ansari	"
25	Naim	Ijlan Ansari	"
26	Zuher	Qain-i-Bijalli	Kasir Ibne Abdullah-i-Shobi

S. No.	Name.	Father's Name.	Slayer's Name.
27	Omar	Qurtai Ansari	Kasir Ibne Abdullah-i-Shobi
28	Habib	Mazahir Asadi	"
29	Hur	Yazid Rishi	Ayub Ibne Masruh
30	Abdullah	Omais Kalbi	Salim slave to Ibne Ziad
31	Hilal	Nafai Bijli-e-Mar-wadi	Not Known
32	Anas	Kahil Asadi	"
33	Qais	Mashar-i-Saidawi	Hasin Ibne Tamim
34	Abdullah	Orwa Ibne Hiraq-i-Ghifari	Not Known
35	Abdur Rahman	Do.	"
36	Jaun	Slave to Abuzar Ghifari	"
37	Shabib	Abdullah Naishali	"
38	Hajjaj	Zaid-e-Sadi	"
39	Karaus	Zuhair Salabi	"
40	Qasit	Do.	"
41	Kanana	Ateeq	"
42	Kharghana	Malik	"
43	Omar	Zabee-i-Zabai	"
44	Yazid	Subete-Qaisi	"
45	Abdullah	Yazid Ibne Subet Qaisi	"
46	Amir	Muslim	"
47	Qenab	Omarin-Namari	"
48	Marta Amir	Muslim	"
49	Saif	Malik	"
50	Zuhair	Bishre-Khasami	"
51	Zaid	Meqal Jofi	"
52	Hajjaj	Masruq Jofi	"
53	Masud	Hajjaj	"
54	Yusr	Masud Ibne Hajjaj	"
55	Majma	Abdullah Aedi	"
56	Ammar	Hassan Ibne Khurej Tai	"
57	Haiyyan	Haris Sahmani Azadi	"
58	Jundub	Hajar Khulani	"
59	Omais	Khalid Saidavi	"
60	Saeed	Slave to Omar Ibne Khalid	"
61	Yazid	Zaid Ibne Mazahir Kindi	"
62	Howi	Malik Saneesi	"
63	Zahir	Slave to Omar Ibne Humuq Khuzai	"
64	Hubaba	Ali Ibne Shaibani	"
65	Salim	Slave to Bani Medinai Kalbi.	"

S. No.	Name. .	Father's Name.	Slayer's Name.
66	Aslam	Kasir-i-Azadi Araj	Not Known
67	Zuhair	Saleem-i-Azadi	"
68	Qasim	Habib Azadi	"
69	Omar	Jundub-i-Hizrami	"
70	Abi Tamama	Omar Ibne Abdul- lah Saidawi	"
71	Hanzala	Asad-i-Shaibani	"
72	Abdur Rahman	Abdulla Ibne Kuraz- i-Johanni	"
73	Ammar	Abee Salamai Hamadani	"
74	Abis	Abee Shabib Shakiri	"
75	Shauzab	Slave to Shakir	"
76	Shabib	Haris Ibne Saree	"
77	Malik	Abdullah Ibne Saree	"
78	Sawar	Abee Himyar-i-Ni- hami Hamadani	"
79	Omar	Abdullah Jundai	"
80	Jabir	Orwai Ghifari	"
81	Wahab Kalbi	Abdullah Ibne Omair	"
82	Burair	Khuza'ir-i-Hamadani	Kaab Ibne Jabir Azadi
83	Wahab's mother	Wife to Abdullah Ibne Omar	Rustam slave to Shimar
84	Obedhllah	Yazid Ibne Subet-i- Qaisi	Not Known

PART II.

THE AL-WIDAA OF IMAM HUSSEIN

"Hussein": I am sore distressed at the unkind treatment received at the hands of the cruel heavens. Pitiful tyranny is exercised towards me by a cruel, unbelieving army ! All the sorrows and troubles of this world have overwhelmed me ! I am become a butt for arrow of affliction and trouble. I am a holy bird stripped of its quills and feathers by the hand of the archer of tyranny, and am become, Oh friends, utterly disable, and unable to fly to my sacred nest. They are going to kill me mercilessly, for no other crime or guilt except that I happen to be a prophet's grandson.

"Shimr" (challenging him): Oh Hussein, why does thou not appear in the field ? Why does not thy majesty show thy face in battle ? How long art thou going to sit still without displaying thy valour in war ? Why dost thou not put on thy robe of martyrdom and come forth ? If thou are indeed so magnanimous as not to fear death, if thou carest not about the whistling sounds of the arrows when let from the bow, mount thou, quickly, thy swift horse named Zul Janah, and deliver thy soul from so many troubles. Yea come to the field of battle, be it as it may. Enter soon among thy women, and with tears bid them a last farewell ; then come forth to war, and show us thy great fortitude.

"Hussein" (talking to himself): Although the accursed fellow Shimr, will put me to death in an hour's time, yet the reproachful language of the enemy seems to be worse than destruction itself. It is better that the foe should sever my head cruelly from the body, than make me hear these abusive words. What can I do ? I have no one left to help me, no Kasim to hold my stirrup for a minute when about to mount. All are gone ! Look around if thou canst find anyone to defend the descendant of Muhammad the chosen of God—if thou canst see any ready to assist the holy family of God's Prophet ! In this land of trials there is no kind protector to have compassion on the household of the Apostle of God, and befriend them.

"Zainab" : May I be offered for the sad tones of thy voice, dear brother ! Time has thrown on my head the black earth of sorrow. It has grieved me to the quick. Wait, brother, do not go till thy Kasim arrives. Have patience for a minute, my Ali Akbar is coming.

"Hussein" (looking around) : Is there one who wishes to please God, his maker ? Is there any willing to behave faithfully towards his real friends ? Is there a person ready to give up his life for our sake, to save us, to defend us in this dreadful struggle of Karbala ?

"Zainab" : Oh, Lord, Zainab's brother has no one to assist or support him ! Occasions of his sorrows are innumerable, without anyone to sympathise with him in the least ! Sad and desolate, he is leaning on his spear ! He has bent his neck in a calamitous manner ; he has no famous Ali Akbar, no renowned Abbas any more !

"Hussein" : Is there any one to pity our condition, to help us in this terrible conflict of Karbala ? Is there a kind soul to give us a hand of assistance for God's sake ?

"Zainab" : Brave cavalier of Karbala, it is not fitting for thee to be so hurried. Go a little more slowly ; troubles will come quickly enough. Didst thou ever say thou hadst a Zainab in the tent ? Is not this poor creature weeping and mourning for thee ?

"Hussein": Dear sister, thou rest of my disquieted, broken heart, smite on thy head and mourn thou thousand-noted nightingale. Today I shall be killed by the ignoble Shīmr. Today shall the rose be turned out of its delightful spot by the tyranny of the thistle; Dear sister, if any dust happen to settle on thy rosy cheeks of my lovely daughter Sukainah, be pleased to wash it away most tenderly with the rose-water of thy tears. My daughter has been accustomed to sit always in the dear lap of her father whenever she wished to rest; for my sake, receive and caress her in thy bosom.

"Zainab": Oh thou intimate friend of this assembly of poor afflicted strangers, the flaming effect of thy speech has left no rest in my mind. Tell me what have we done that thou shouldst so reward us? Who is the criminal among us for whose sake we must suffer thus? Take us back, brother, to Madinah, the sacred monument of our noble grandfather; let us go home and live like queens in our own country.

"Hussein": Oh my afflicted, distressed, tormented sister, would to God there were a way of escape for me! Notwithstanding they have cruelly cut down the cypress-like stature of my dear son Ali Akbar; notwithstanding Kasim my lovely nephew tinged himself with his own blood; still they are intent to kill me also. They do not allow me to go back from Irak, nor do they let me turn elsewhere. They will neither permit me to go to India, nor the Capital of China, I cannot set out for the territory of Abyssinia, or take refuge in Zanzibar.

"Zainab": Oh, how am I vexed in my mind, dear brother, on hearing these sad things! May I die, rather than listen to such affecting words any more! What shall we, an assembly of desolate widows and orphans, do after thou art gone? Oh, how can we live?

"Hussein": Oh miserable creature, weep not now, nor be so very much upset; thou shalt cry plentifully hereafter owing to the wickedness of time. When the wicked Shīmr shall sever my head from the body; when thou shalt be made a captive prisoner, and forced to ride on an unsaddled camel; when my body shall be trampled under foot by the enemy's horses, and trodden under their hoofs; when my beloved Sukainah shall be cruelly struck by Shīmr my wicked murderer; when they shall lead thee away captive from Karbala to Sham; and when they shall make thee and others live there in a horrible, ruined place; yea, when thou shalt see all this, then thou mayest, and wilt verily, cry. But I admonish thee, sister, since this sad case has no remedy but patience, to resign the whole matter, submissively, to the Lord, the good Maker of all. Mourn not for my misfortune, but bear it patiently, without giving occasion to the enemy to rejoice triumphantly on this account, or speak reproachfully concerning us.

"Kulsum": Thou struttest about gaily, O Hussein, thou beloved of my heart. Look a little behind thee; see how Kulsum is sighing after thee with tearful eyes! I am strewing pearls in thy way, precious jewels from the sea of my eyes! Let me put my head on the hoof of thy winged steed, Zul Janah.

"Hussein": Beloved sister, kindle not a fire in my heart by so doing. Take away thy head from under the hoof of my steed. Oh thousand-noted nightingale, sing not such a sad-toned melody. I am going away; be thou the kind keeper of my helpless ones.

"Kulsum": Behold what the heaven have at length brought upon me! what they have done also to my brother! Him they have made to have parched lips through thirst, and me they have caused to melt into water, and gush out like tears from the eyes! Harsh severity is mingled with tyrannous cruelty.

"Hussein": Trials, afflictions and pains, the thicker they fall on man dear sister, the better do they prepare him for his journey heavenward. We rejoice in tribulations, seeing they are but temporary, and yet they work out an eternal and blissful end. Though it is predestined that I should suffer martyrdom in this shameful manner, yet the treasury of everlasting happiness shall be at my disposal as a consequent reward. Thou must think of that, and be no longer sorry. The dust raised in the field of such battles is as highly esteemed by me, Oh sister, as the philosopher's stone was, in former times, by the alchemists; and the soil of Karbala is the sure remedy of my inward pains.

"Kulsum": May I be sacrificed for thee! Since the occurrence is thus inevitable, I pray thee describe to thy poor sister Kulsum her duty after thy death. Tell me, where shall I go, or in what direction set my face? What am I to do and which of thy orphan children am I to caress most?

"Hussein": Show thy utmost kindness, good sister, to Sukainah, my darling girl, for the pain of being fatherless is most severely felt by children too much fondled by their parents, especially girls. I have regard to all my children, to be sure, but I love Sukainah most.

"Fizzah" (an old Female Slave of Hussein mother): Dignified master, I am sick and weary in heart at the bare idea of separation from thee. Have a kind regard to me, an old slave, much stricken with age! Master, by thy soul do I swear that I am altogether weary of life. I have grown old in thy service; pardon me, please, all the faults ever committed by me.

"Hussein": Yes, thou hast served us, indeed, for a very long time. Thou hast shown much affection and love towards me and my children. Oh handmaid of my dear mother Fatimah; thou hast verily suffered much in our house; how often didst thou grind corn with thine own hand for my mother! Thou hast also dandled Hussein most caressingly in thy arms. Thou art blackfaced, that is true but thou hast, I opine, a pure white heart, and are much esteemed by us. Today I am about to leave thee, owing thee, at the same time, innumerable thanks for the good services thou hast performed; but I beg thy padron for all inconsiderate actions on my part.

"Fizzah": May I be a sacrifice for thee, thou royal ruler of the capital of faith! Turn not my days black, like my face, thou benevolent master. Truly I have had many troubles on your behalf. How many nights have I spent in watchfulness at thy cradle! At one moment I would caress thee in my arms, at another I would fondle thee in my bosom. I became prematurely old by my diligent services, Oh Hussein! Is it proper now that thou shouldst put round my poor neck the heavy chain of thy intolerable absence? Is this, dear master, the reward of the services I have done thee?

"Hussein": Though thy body, Oh heavenly maid, is now broken down by age and infirmity, yet thou hast served us all the days of thy life with sincerity and love; thou must know, therefore that thy diligence and vigilance will never be disregarded by us. Excuse me today, when I am offering my body and soul in the cause of God, and cannot heal thee at all; but be sure I will pay the reward of thy services in the day of universal account.

"Fizzah": Dost thou remember, good sir, how many troubles I have suffered with thee for the dear sake of Ali Akbar, the light of thine eyes? Though I have not suckled him with my own breasts, to be sure, I laboured hard for him, till he reached the age of eighteen years and came here to Karbala. But, alas! dear flourishing Ali Akbar has been this day cruelly killed—what a pity! and I strove so much for his sake, yet all, as it were, in vain. Yea, what a sad loss!

"Hussein": Speak not of my Ali Akbar any more. Oh heavenly maiden nor set fire to the granary of my patience and make it aflame. (Turning to his sister) Poor distressed Zairab, have the goodness to be kind always to my mother's old maid, for she experienced many troubles in our family; she has laboured hard in training Ali Akbar, my son.

"Umm Lailah" (the mother of Ali Akbar): The elegant stature of my Akbar fell on the ground; like a beautiful cypress tree it was forcibly felled! Alas for the memory of thy upright stature! Alas, Oh my youthful son of handsome form and appearance! Alas my troubles at night-time for thee! How often did I watch thy bed, singing lullabies for thee until the morning! How sweet is the memory of those times! yea, how pleasant the very thought of those days! Alas! where art thou, dear child? Oh thou who art ever remembered by me, come and see thy mother's wretched condition, come!

"Hussein" (not knowing that it is Umm Lailah who is crying): Oh Lord, why is this mournful voice so affecting? Me thinks the owner of it, the bemoaning person, has a flame in her heart. It resembles the doleful tone of a lapwing whose wings are burned! like as when a miraculous lapwing, the companion of Solomon the wise, the king of God's holy people, received intelligence suddenly about the death of its royal guardian!

"Umm Lailah": Again I am put in mind of my dear son! Oh my heart, melted into blood, pour thyself forth! Dear son, whilst thou wast alive, I had some honour and respect, every body had some regard for me; but since thou art gone, I am altogether abandoned. Woe be to me! I am despised and rejected. Woe unto me!

"Hussein" (addressing Umm Lailah): Do not set fire to the harvest of my soul any further. Hussein is, before God, greatly ashamed of his shortcomings towards thee. Come out from the tent, for it is the last meeting previous to separating from one another for ever; thy distress is an additional weight to the heavy burden of my grief.

"Umm Lailah": I humbly state. Oh glory of all ages, that I did not expect from thy saintship that thou wouldest disregard thy handmaid in such a way. Thou dost show thy kind regard and favour to all except me. Dost thou not remember my sincere services done to thee? Am I not by birth a descendant of the glorious kings of Persia, brought as a captive to Arabia when the former Emirs fell and gave place to the new-born monarchy of the latter kingdom? The Judge, the living Creator, was pleased to grant me an offspring, whom we called Ali Akbar, this day lost to us for ever. May I be offered for thee! While Ali Akbar my son was alive, I had indeed a sort of esteem and credit with thee; but now that my cypress, my newly-sprung-up cedar, is unjustly felled. I have fallen off from credit too, and must therefore shed tears.

"Hussein": Be it known unto thee, Oh, thou violet of the flower-garden of modesty, that thou art altogether mistaken. I swear by the holy enlightened dust of my mother Zahrah's grave, that thou art more honourable now than ever. I well remember the affectionate recommendations of Ali Akbar, our son, concerning thee. How much he was mindful of thee at the moment of his parting! How tenderly he cared for thee and spoke concerning thee to every one of his family.

"Umm Lailah": Oh gracious Lord, I adjure thee by the merit of my son, Ali Akbar, never to lessen the shadow of Hussein over my head. May no one ever be in my miserable condition—never be a desolate, homeless woman like me!

"Hussein": Oh thou unfortunate Zainab, my sister, the hour of separation is come! The day of joy is gone for ever! the night of affliction has drawn near! Drooping, withering sister, yet most blest in thy temper, I have a request from thee which I fear to make known.

"Zainab": May I be a sacrifice for thy heart, thou moon-faced, glorious son, there is nobody here, if thou has a private matter to disclose to thy sister.

"Hussein": Dear unfortunate sister, who art already severely vexed in heart, if I tell thee what my request is, what will be thy condition then? Though I cannot restrain myself from speaking, still I am in doubt as to which is better, to speak, or to forbear.

"Zainab": My breast is pierced! My heart boils within me like a cauldron owing to this thy conversation. Thou soul of thy sister, hold not back from Zainab what thou hast in thy mind.

"Hussein": My poor sister, I am covered with shame before thee, I cannot lift up my head. Though the request is a trifle, yet I know it is grievous to thee to grant. It is this; bring me an old, dirty, ragged garment to put on. But do not ask me. I pray thee, the reason why, until I myself think proper to tell thee.

"Zainab": I am now going to the tent to fetch thee what thou seekest; but I am utterly astonished brother, as to why thou dost want this loathesome thing. (Returning with a tattered shirt). Take it, here is the ragged robe for which thou didst ask. I wonder what thou wilt do with it.

"Hussein": Do not remain here, dear sister. Go for a while to thine own tent; for if thou see that which I am about to do, thou wilt be grievously disturbed. Turn to thy tent, poor miserable sister, listen to what I say, and have me, I pray thee, alone.

"Zainab" (going away): I am gone, but I am sorry I cannot tell what this enigma means. It is puzzling indeed. Remain thou with thy mysterious garment, Oh Hussein! may all of us be offered as a ransom for thee, dear brother. Thou art without any to assist or befriend thee! Thou art surrounded by the wicked enemy! Yes, thy kind helpers have all been killed by the unbelieving nation!

"Hussain" (putting on the garment): The term of life has no perpetual duration in itself. Whoever saw in a flower-garden a rose without its thorn! I will put on this old robe close to my skin, and place over it my new apparel, though neither the old nor the new of this world can be depended on. I hope Zainab has not been observing what I have been doing, for, poor creature, she can scarcely bear the sight of any such like thing.

"Zainab": Alas! I do not know what is the matter with Hussein, my brother. What an old garment has to do with being a king? Dost thou desire, O Hussein, that the enemy should come to know this thing and reproach thy sister about it? Put off, I pray thee, this old ragged garment, otherwise I shall pull off my head-dress and uncover my head for shame.

"Hussein": Rend not thy dress, modest daughter of the Lady of the Paradise, nor pull off thy head-covering. There is a mystery involved in my action. Know that what Hussein has done has a good meaning in it. His putting on an old garment is not without signification.

"Zainab": What mystery can be in this work, thou perfect high priest of faith? I will never admit any until thou shalt have fully explained the thing according to my capacity.

"Hussein": Today, dear sister, Shimr will behave cruelly towards me. He will sever my dear head from the body. His dagger not cutting my throat, he will be obliged to sever my head from behind. After he has killed me, when he begins to strip me of my clothes, he may perchance be ashamed to take off this ragged robe and thereby leave my body naked on the ground.

"Zainab": Oh Lord, have mercy on my distracted heart! Thou alone art aware of the state of my mind. Gracious Creator, preserve the soul of Hussein! Let not heaven pull down my house over me!

"Sukainah": Dear Father, by our Lord it is a painful thing to be fatherless; a misery, a great calamity to be helpless, bleeding in the heart, and an outcast! Dismount from the saddle, and make me sit by thy side. To pass over me or neglect me at such a time is very distressing. Let me put my head on thy dear lap, Oh father. It is sad thou shouldst not be aware of thy dear child's condition.

"Hussein": Bend not thy neck on one side, thou my beloved child; nor weep so sadly, like an orphan. Neither moan so melodiously, like a disconsolate nightingale. Come, lay thy dear head on my knees once more, and shed not so copiously a flood of tears from thine eyes, thou spirit of my life.

"Sukainah": Dear father, thou whose lot is but grief, have mercy on me, mercy! Oh thou my physician in every pain and trouble have pity on me! have pity on me! Alas! my heart, for the mention of the word separation! Alas, my grievance, for what is unbearable.

"Hussein": Groan not, wail not, my dear Sukainah, my poor oppressed, distressed girl. Go to thy tent and sleep soundly in thy bed until thy father gets thee some water to drink.

"Zainab": Alas! Alas! woe to me! my Hussein is gone from me! Alas! the arrow of my heart is shot away from the hand. Woe unto me, a thousand woes! I am to remain without Hussein! The worshipper of the truth is gone to meet his destined fate with a blood stained shroud.

"Hussain": My disconsolate Zainab, be not so impatient. My homeless sister, show not thyself so fretful. Have patience, sister, the reward of patient believers is the best of all. Render God thanks, the crown of intercession is fitted for our head only.

"Zainab": Oh my afflicted mother, thou best of all women, pass a minute by these in Karbala! see thy daughters prisoners of sorrow! behold them amidst strangers and foreigners. Come out a while from thy Pavilion in Paradise, Oh Fatimah, and weep affectionately over the state of us, thy children!

"Hussein": I have become friendless and without any helper, in a most strange manner. I have lost my troop and army in a wonderful way. Where is Akbar, my son? Let him come to me and hold the bridle of my horse, that I may mount. Where is Kasim my nephew? Will he not help me and get ready my stirrup to make me cheerful? Why should I not shed much blood from mine eyes seeing I cannot behold my standard-bearer? A brother is for the day of misfortune and calamity! A brother is better than a hundred diadems and thrones! A brother is the essence of life in the world! He who has a brother, though he be old, yet is young. Who is there to bring my horse for me? There is none even to weep for me in this state of misery!

"Kulsum": Because there is no Ali Akbar, dear brother, to help thee, Zainab, thy sister, will hold the horse for thee; and seeing Abbas, thy brother, is no longer to be found, I myself will bear the standard before thy winged steed instead of him

"Zainab": Let Zainab mourn bitterly for her brother's desolation. Whoever saw a woman, a gentlewoman, doing the duty of a groom or servants? Who can know, Oh Lord, besides Thee, the sad state of Hussein in Karbala, where his people so deserted him that a woman like myself is obliged to act as a servant for him.

"Kulsum": I am a standard-bearer for Hussein, the martyr of Karbala, Oh Lord God. I am the sister of Abbas; yea, the miserable sister of both. Oh friends, it being the tenth day of Moharram, I am therefore assisting Hussein. I am bearing the ensign for him instead of Abbas his standard-bearer.

"Zainab": Uncover your breasts a minute, Oh, ye tear-shedding people, for it is time to beat the drum, seeing the king is going to ride. Oh Solomon the prophet, where is thy glory? What has become of thy pompous retinue? Where are thy brothers, nephews and companions?

"Hussein": There is none left to help me. My sister Zainab holds the bridle of the horse, and walks before me. Who ever saw a lady acting thus?

"Zainab": Thou art going alone! May the souls of all be a ransom for thee! and may thy departure make souls quit their bodies! A resurrection will be produced in thy tent by the cry of orphans and widows.

"Hussein": Though it grieves me to go, yet I do it; peradventure I may see the face of Asghar and the countenance of Akbar, those cypresses, those roses of Paradise.

"Zainab": Would to God Zainab had died this very minute before thy face, in thy sight, that she might not behold such elegant bodies, such beautiful forms, rolling in their own blood!

"Hussein": Oh poor sister, if thou die here in this land in that sudden way that thou desirest, then who will ride in thy stead, in the city of Kufah, on the camel's back?

"Zainab": Slight not my pain, dear brother, for Zainab is alarmed as to the import of thy speech. What shall I do with thy family—with the poor widows and young children.

"Hussein": Oh afflicted one, it is decreed I should be killed by means of dagger and swords; henceforth, dear sister, thou shalt not see me. Behold, this is a separation between me and thee!

"The Darwish of Kabul": Oh Lord God, wherefore is the outward appearance of a man of God usually without decoration or ornament? And why is the lap of the man of this world generally full of gold and jewels? Oh what account is the pillow of this great person the black dust of the road? And for what reason are the bed and cushions of the rebellious made of velvet and stuffed with down? Either Islam, the religion of peace and charity, has no true foundation in the world, or this young man, who is wounded and suffers from thirst, is still an infidel.

"Hussein": Why are thine eyes pouring down tears, young Darwish? Hast thou also lost an Akbar in the prime of his youth? Thou art immersed, as a water-fowl, in thy tears. Has thine Abbas been slain, thirsting, on the bank of the river Euphrates, that thou cryest so piteously? But if thou art sad only on account of my misfortune, then it matters not. Let me know whence comest thou, and whither is thy face set?

"The Darwish": It happened, young man, that last night I arrived in this valley, and made my lodging there. When one-half of the night had passed, of a sudden great difficulty befell me, for I heard a child bemoaning and complaining of thirst, having given up altogether the idea of living any longer in this world. Sometimes it would beat its head and cry out for water; at other times it appeared to fall on the ground, fainting and motionless. I have, therefore, brought some

water in this cup for that poor child, that it may drink and be refreshed a little. So I humbly beg thee, dear sir, to direct me to the place where the young child may be found, and tell me what is its name.

"Hussein": Oh God let no man be ever in my pitiful condition, nor any family in this sad and deplorable state to which I am reduced. Oh young man, the child mentioned by thee is the peace of my troubled mind; it is my poor, miserable little girl.

"The Darwish": May I be offered for thee, dear sir, for thy tearful eyes! Why should thy daughter be so sadly mourning and complaining? My heart is overwhelmed with grief for the abundance of tears running down thy cheeks, Why should the daughter of one like thee, a generous soul, suffer from thirst?

"Hussein": Know, Oh young man that we are never in need of the water of this life. Thou art quite mistaken if thou hast supposed us to be of this world. If I will I can make the moon, or any other celestial orb, fall down on the earth; how much more can I get water for my children. Look at the hollow made in the ground with my spear; water would gush out of it if I were to like. I voluntarily die of thirst to obtain a crown from God. I die parched and offer myself a sacrifice for the sins of my people, that they should be saved from the wrath to come.

"The Darwish": What is thy name, Sir? I perceive that thou art one of the chief saints of the most beneficent God whose descriptions appear ostensibly in all the revealed scriptures including Torah, Zabur & Furkan. It is befitting for the Great Solomon, the Apostle of Most High to bow down before thy glory. It is evident to me that thou art the brightness of the Lord's image, but I cannot tell to which sacred garden thy holy rose belongs.

"Hussein": Oh Darwish, thou wilt soon be informed of the whole matter, for thou shalt be a martyr thyself; for thy plans and the result thereof have been revealed to me. Tell me, Oh Darwish, what is the end thou hast in view in thy hazardous enterprise? When thou shalt have told me that, I will disclose to thee who I am.

"The Darwish": I intend, noble sir, after I have known the mystery of thy affairs, to set out, if God wills, from Karbala to Majaf namely, to the place where Ali, the highly exalted king of religion, the sovereign lord of the empire of existence, the supreme master of all the Darwishes, is buried. Yea, I am going to visit the tomb of Ali, the successor of the chosen of God, the son-in-law of the Prophet, the lion of the true Lord, the prince of believers, Haidar, the champion of faith.

"Hussein": Be it known unto thee, Oh Darwish, that I who am so sad and sorrowful, am the rose of the garden of that prince, I am of the family of the believers thou hast just mentioned. I am Hussein the intercessor on the Day of Resurrection, the rose of the garden of glory,

"The Darwish": May I be offered a sacrifice for thy blessed arrival! Padron me my fault, and give me permission to fight the battle of faith, for I am weary of life. It is better for me to be killed, and be delivered at once from so many vexations of spirit. Martyrdom is, in fact, one of the glories of my faith.

"Hussein": Go forth, Oh atom, which aspires to the glory of the sun; go forth, thou hast become at last worthy to know the hidden mysteries of faith. He who is slain for the sake of Hussein shall have an abundant reward from God; yea 'he shall be raised to life with Ali Akbar the sweet son of Hussein.'

"The Darwish" (addressing Hussein's antagonists): You cruel people have no religion. You are fire-worshippers ignorant of God and His Law. How

long will you act unjustly towards the offspring of the priesthood? Is the account of the day of Resurrection all false?

"Ibn Saud" (the general of Yazid's army): Oh ye brave soldiers of Yazid, deprive this fellow of his fund of life. Make his friends ready to mourn for him.

"Hussein": Is there anyone to help me? Is there any assistant to lend me his aid?

"Jaffer" the King of Jinns, with his troops, coming to Hussein's assistance): Oh King of men and jinns. Oh Hussein, peace be on thee! Oh judge of corporeal and spiritual beings, peace be on thee!

"Hussein": On thee be peace, thou handsome youth! Who art thou, that salutest us at such a time? Though thy affairs are not hidden from me at all, still it is advisable to ask thy name.

"Jaffer": Oh Lord of men and jinns, I am the least of thy servants, and my name is Jaffer, the chief ruler of all the tribes of jinns. Today, while I was sitting on the glorious throne of my majesty, easy in mind, without any sad idea or thought whatever, I suddenly heard thy voice, when thou didst sadly implore assistance; and on hearing thee I lost my patience and senses. And, behold, I have come out with troops of jinns, of various abilities and qualifications, to lend thee help if necessary.

"Hussein": In the old abbey of this perishable kingdom, none can ever, Oh Jaffer, attain to immortality. What can I do with the empire of the world, or its tempting glories, after my dear ones have all died and gone? Is it proper that I, an old man, should live, and Akbar, a blooming youth, die in the prime of age? Return thou Jaffer, to thy home, and weep for me as such as thou canst.

"Jaffer" (returning): Alas for Hussein's exile and helplessness! Alas for his continual groans and sighs.

"Hussein" (coming back from the field, dismounts his horse, and making a heap of dust, lays his head on it.): Oh earth of Karbala, do thou assist me, I pray! since I have no mother, be thou to me instead of one.

"Ibn Saud" orders the army to stone Hussein." Oh ye men of valour, Hussein the son of Ali has tumbled down from the winged horse; if I be not mistaken, heaven has fallen on earth! It is better for you to stone him most cruelly. Dispatch him soon, with stones, to his companions.

"Hussein": Ah, woe to me! my forehead is broken; blood runs down my luminous face.

"Ibn Saud": Who is that brave soldier who in order to show his gratitude to Yazid his sovereign lord, will step forward and, with a blow of his scimitar, slay Hussein, the son of Ali.

"Shimr": I am he whose dagger is famous for bloodshed. My mother has borne me for this work alone. I care not about the conflict of the Day of Judgment; I am a worshipper of Yazid, and have no fear of God. I can make the great throne of the Lord to shake and tremble. I alone can sever from the body of the head of Hussein the son of Ali. I am he who has no share in Islam. I will strike the chest of Hussein, the ark of God's knowledge, with my boots, without any fear of punishment.

"Hussein": Oh, how wounds caused by arrows and daggers do smart! Oh God, have mercy on the Day of Judgment on my people for my sake. The time of death has arrived, but I have not my Akbar with me, Oh Lord God,

Hussein who has happened to be thus situated every one when he dies has at least a mother at his head. But my mother is not here to rend her garments for me : she is not alive, that she might close my eyes when I die.

"Fatimah" (his mother appearing) : I am come to see thee, my child, my child ! May die another time ! How shall I see thee slain, rolling in thine own blood, my child, my child !

"Hussein" : Come dear mother, I am anxiously waiting for thee. Come. Come ! I have partly to complain of thee. How is that thou hast altogether forsaken thy son ? How is that thou camest so late to visit me ?

"Fatimah" : May I be offered for thy wounded, defaced body ! Tell me, what dost thou wish thy mother to do now for thee ?

"Hussein" : I am now mother, at the point of death. The ark of the life is going to be cast on shore, mother. It is time that my soul should leave the body. Come, mother, close my eyes with thy kind hands.

"Fatimah" : Oh Lord, how difficult for a mother to see a dear child dying ! I am Zahrah who am making this sad noise, because I have to close the eyes of my son Hussein, who is on the point of death. Oh, tell me if thou hast any desire long cherished in thy heart, for I am distressed in mind owing to thy sad sighs !

"Hussein" : Go mother, my soul is come to my throat ; I had no other desire except one, with which I must die and rise in the Day of Resurrection, namely, to see Ali Akbar's wedding.

"Shimr" : Make thy confession for I want to sever thy head, and cause a perpetual separation between it and the body.

"Zainab" : Oh Shimr, do not go beyond thy limit ; let me bind something on my brother's eyes.

"Hussein" : Go to thy tent, sister, I am already undone, go away, Zahrah, my mother has already closed my eyes, show to Sukainah my daughter always the tenderness of a mother. Be very kind to my child after me.

"Shimr" (addressing Hussein) : Stretch forth thy feet toward the Holy Kaba, the sacred temple of Mecca. See how may dagger waves over thee ! It is time to cut the throat.

"Hussein" : Oh Lord, for the merit of me, dear child of thy prophet ; Oh Lord, for the sad groanings of my miserable sister ; Oh Lord for the sake of young Abbas rolling in his blood, even that young brother of mine that was equal to my soul, I pray thee, in the Day of Judgment, forgive, Oh Merciful Lord, the sins of my grandfather's people, and grant me bountifully, the key of the treasure of intercession.

No sooner had Shimr severed Hussein's head from his body, then he rode a troop of horsemen over his corpse, backwards and forwards, over and over again, until it was trampled into the very ground, a scarcely recognisable mass of mangled flesh and mud.

"In a distant age and climate the tragical death of Hussein, will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader." (Gibbon: Decline and Fall of Roman Empire.)

خطبة سيدنا الامام حسين الاخيرة في كربلاء

قال فيلسوف الاسلام العلامة حجة الاسلام السيد هبة الدين الحسيني وزير معارف العراق سابقاً في كتابه «نهضة الحسين» في صحيفة ٨٠ - قال حفظه الله تعالى :-
 «سيرة الحسين «ع» سلسلة ادلة على قوة حسن ظنه بالناس وان نفسه كانت مفعمة بآمال الخير فيهم ولاغرو فان قوة آمال الناهضين تقاس بقوة اعتقادهم بحقهم والحسين «ع» كان رمز الايمان وآية الحق ويرى حقه كما يرى الشمس في رابعة النهار فخرى بان يكون على الدوام متفلاً وبشيراً وهو يرى اكثر الناس نحو ما يرى نفسه مستعدين لعبادة الحق اذا صادفوا الدليل فكان الحسين «ع» يعامل اعداءه معاملة من يحترمون الحق بينهم غافلون عنه فكان يبذل قصارى الجهد في تنوير افكارهم بالاحتجاجات واقامة المظاهرات ويستفرغ وسعه في انذارهم واخطارهم بالرسل والخطب في حين ان جمهور خصومه كانوا من سفلة البشر وعبد الطاغوت اولئك الذين لا يقيمون للحق وزناً ولا يرون لغير المال والقوة شأناً وعليه قام حسين الايمان بمظاهرة باهرة بعد اليأس من سماح القوم له بالرجوع فلبس عمامة رسول الله (ص) ورداءه وتقلد بسيف جده النبي وركب ناقته او فرسه المعروفة وخرج الى العدو بهيئة جده النبي «ص» وزيه وقد كان هو في ملاحه شبيه جده وكانت هذه الهيئة وحدها كافية لاظهار اولويته بخلافة جده من طاغية الشام لوكانوا يعقلون فعرف شياطين القوم ان هذه المظاهرة تعود على الحسين «ع» بفائدة سيما لو وجد مجالاً للكلام وذكر السامعين بآيات من وحى جده فولولوا بلفظ وضجيج ليضعوا على السامعين كلام الله من فم ولي الله بهيئة نبي الله وهو ابن بنت رسول الله «ص». غير ان حسين المجد لم يضع فرصته فاستنصتهم فابوا ان ينصتوا له لجأجأ وعناداً فنادى فيهم : ايها الناس اسمعوا قولي ولا تعجلوا حتى اعظكم بواحدة وحتى اعذر اليكم فان اعطيتموني النصف كنتم بذلك سعداء والا فاجمعوا رأيكم ثم لا يكن امركم عليكم غمة ثم اقضوا الي ولا تنظرون ان وليي الله الذي نزل الكتاب وهو يتولي الصالحين .

فلما ساد الصمت وهذا الضجيج خطبهم محمد الله واثني عليه ونعت النبي صلى عليه فلم يسمع ابلغ منطقاً منه ثم قال : «اما بعد : فانسوني من انا ثم راجعوا انفسكم وعاتبوها فانظروا هل يحل لكم قتلي وانتهاك حرمتي ؟ ألسنت ابن بنت نبيكم وابن وصيه وابن عمه

و اول المؤمنين المصدق لرسول الله (ص) وبما جاء من عنده؟ أوليس حمزة سيد الشهداء عمي؟ أوليس جعفر الطيار في الجنة بجناحين عمي؟ أولم يبلغكم ما قال رسول الله «ص» لي ولاخي (هذان سيدا شباب اهل الجنة) فان صدقتموني فيما اقول وهو الحق والله ما تعمدت الكذب منذ علمت ان الله يمقت اهله. وان كذبتموني فان فيكم من ان سألتهم عن ذلك اخبركم. سلوا جابر الانصاري وابا سعيد الخدري وسهل الساعدي وزيد بن ارقم وانس ابن مالك يخبروك انهم سمعوا هذه المقالة من رسول الله «ص» اما في هذا حاجز لكم عن سفك دمي؟- الى ان قال - فان كنتم في شك من ذلك أو تشكون في اني ابن بنت نبيكم فوالله لا يوجد بين المشرق والمغرب ابن بنت نبي غيري. و بحكم أنطلبوني بقتيل منكم قتلته او مال لكم استهلكته؟ ثم نادى ياشبث بن الربيع ويا حجار بن البحر ويا قيس بن الاشعث ويا يزيد بن الحارث ويا عمرو ابن الحجاج ألم تكتبوا الي ان (قد اينعت الثمار واخضرت الجنات وانما تقدم على جند لك مجند) «

لقد اسمعهم شبل علي «ع» خطاباً قويم اللهجة قوي الحجة لو كان ثمة منصف لكننا القوم لم يقابلوه الا بكلمة (انا لاندري ما تقول!! انزل على حكم بني عمك والا فلسنا تاركيك).

كلمة مرة طليت بالقحة و تبطنت بالعجرفة والانحراف نحو الزور والغرور فاجابهم حسين العلا (لا والله لا اعطيكم بيدي اعطاء الذليل ولا اقر لكم اقرار العبيد بأبي الله ذلك لنا ورسوله «ص» و حجور طابت و طهرت فلا تؤثر طاعة اللئام على مصارع الكرام .

لكنها المظاهرة باحتجاجه لم تذهب سدى وعبثاً فما مد الظلام رواقه حتى انجذب الى الحسين «ع» عديد من فرسان ابن سعد من ذوي المروءة والفتوة نائبين تائبين عند الخيم الحسيني . الخ «



The Last Sermon of Husain at Karbala.

Allama Hujjatul Islam Syed Hibat-ud-din Shahrastani-El-Husaini, one of the greatest authorities on Islam, the author of more than 80 books in Arabic and an ex-Minister of Education of Iraq writes the following in his famous Arabic book 'Nahdat-ul-Husain' or 'Husain's Revolt' on page 81 from most authoritative sources thus :—"Husain dressed the turban of the Apostle of Allah-Mohammad—and his long coat; and having hung the sword of his grand-father, the Prophet, and having galloped his horse or his she-camel, which is known as Zuljinah, threw himself before the foe in the same state as his grand-father, the Prophet would do. He, then, resembled in this appearance like that of his grand-father. This resemblance alone was sufficient to go to prove his right to the Caliphate as against the rebel of Syria, had the people but knew. So the shrewd amongst the people understood that this appearing of Husain will reap harvest for Husain especially if Husain was given an opportunity to deliver a speech or if he were to remind the audience by reciting a few verses of the revelation of his grand-father, the people would create trouble in such a way so as not to allow the audience to hear the Word of Allah from the mouth of the Saint of Allah in the appearance of the Prophet of Allah as Husain was the son of the daughter of the Apostle of Allah. Imam Husain requested them to hear him patiently but they refused positively. It is here that Husain roared and said, "O People, hear my word and do not make haste till I give you a speech. If you even give me half of what I desire, you will be among the successful, otherwise gather your thoughts aright and then decide for me. Surely Allah is my lord, Who revealed the Book and He it is who will guard the just men."

When the roaring vanished and the situation became quiet, Husain spoke to them. He first praised Allah and paid respects to the Prophet. The reporter records that nobody heard before a more eloquent and excellent speech than this. He said, "Know me who am I, and then think and blame yourselves. Look, is it permissible to you of murdering and degrading me? Am I not the son of the daughter of your Prophet, and the son of his successor, his cousin and the first of the Believers in the Apostle of Allah and whatever had been revealed to him by His Lord? Was not Hamza, the lord of Martyrs my Uncle? Was not Jafar too, my Uncle? Did this not convey to you, what the Apostle of Allah had said for me and my brother, (these (both) are the chiefs of the youth of Paradise?) If you bear witness to what I say then that is the Truth. By Allah I do not say lie since I knew that Allah curses the people who utter lie. And if you think I am a liar, then you have got men amongst you; if you ask them, they will inform you. Inquire Jabir-El-Ansari and Aba Said-El-Khidri and Sahal-As-Saidi and Zaid Bin Arkam and Anas Bin Malik. These men will surely tell you that they heard this sentence from the Apostle of Allah. Is this testimony not sufficient to prevent you from shedding my blood." "If you are still in doubt" proceeded Husain, "about that or if you doubt my being the son of the daughter of your Prophet, then (know) by Allah, nowhere is found—in the East or the West—any other son of the daughter of Prophet, except me. Woe to you (O people) do you charge me for a murder? Did I murder any one from amongst you? Or that did I snatch the property of anyone from among you?" Then Husain called :—"O Shabs Bin-el-Rabee, O Hajar Bin Abhar, O Qais Bin El-Ash-as, O Yazid Bin El-Haris, O Amr Ibnal Hajjaj, did you people not write to me that "the fruits became ripe, the gardens green and there is a ready army for (welcoming) thee?" Surely the lion (Husain) of Ali (peace be on him) spoke to them in the most stirring speech, full of reasons and rationalities, had they only been just men. But the audience did not pay any heed to him except: "We do not know what you say. Accept the order, or else we will never leave you." Husain replied to this :—"By Allah,

never, never shall I stretch my hand towards you in a disgraceful manner, nor shall I admit your order like slaves do. God forbid, that for us and His Apostles. Surely the holy ones shall never accept the command of the mean."

But all the same the agitation did not, totally go to winds. By evening some good cavalry men of Ibn Sa'ad, joined the side of Husain. For they repented and found out the Truth in Husain, though they were very few in number.

خطبة سيدنا الامام على ابن الحسين

(عليهما السلام) في دمشق

حدثنا ابي مخنف :-

« و امر يزيد رجلاً ان يصعد المنبر ويسب الحسين ففعل ذلك فقال علي بن الحسين للرجل بالله عليك الا ما اذنت لي ان اصعد المنبر و اتكلم بكلام فيه رضى الله و لرسوله فقال له اصعد و قل ما بدالك قال فصعد المنبر و تكلم بكلام الانبياء بعذوبة لسان و فصاحة و بلاغة فاقبل اليه الناس من كل مكان فقال « ايها الناس من عرفني فقد عرفني و من لم يعرفني فانا اعرفه بنفسى انا علي بن الحسين بن علي بن ابي طالب انا ابن من حج و لبى انا ابن من طاف و سعى انا ابن زمزم و الله انا ابن فاطمة الزهراء انا ابن المذبوح من القفا انا ابن العطشان حتى قضى انا ابن من منعوه من الماء و احلوه على سائر الورى انا ابن محمد المصطفى انا ابن صريع كربلاء انا ابن من راحت انصاره تحت الثرى انا ابن من غدت حريمه اسرى انا ابن من ذبحت اطفاله من غير سوء انا ابن من اضرم الاعداء فى خيمته لظى انا ابن من اضحى صريعاً بالعرى انا ابن من لاله غسل ولا كفن برى انا ابن من رفعوا راسه على القنا انا ابن من هتكت حريمه بارض كربلاء انا ابن من جسمه بارض و راسه باخرى انا ابن من لا يرى حوله غير الأعداء انا ابن من سبيت حريمه و الى الشام تهدى انا ابن من لا ناصر له و لاحمى ثم قال سلام الله عليه ايها الناس قد فضلنا الله بخمس فينا و الله مختلف الملائكة و معدن الرسالة فينا نزلت الآيات و نحن قدنا العالمين للهدى و فينا الشجاعة فلم نخف باساً و البراعة و الفصاحة اذا افتحز الفصحاء و فينا الهدى الى سبيل السوء و العلم لمن اراد ان يستفيد علماً و المحبة فى قلوب المؤمنين من الورى و لنا الشأن الاعلى فى الأرض و السماء و لولانا ما خلق الله الدنيا و كل فخر دون فخرنا يهوى و محبنا يسقى و باغضنا يوم القيمة يشقى قال فلما سمع الناس كلامه ضجوا بالبكاء و النحيب و علت الأصوات فحاف يزيد الفتنة فامر المؤذن ان يقطع عليه خطبته فصعد المؤذن و قال الله

أكبر فقال الامام كبرت كبيراً وعظمت عظيماً وقلت حقاً فقال المؤذن اشهد ان لا اله الا الله فقال اشهد بها مع كل شاهد واقرب بها مع كل جاحد فقال المؤذن اشهد ان محمداً رسول الله فبكى على وقال يا يزيد سئلتك بالله محمد جدّي ام جدك فقال جدك فقال له فلم قتل اهل بيته فلم يرد عليه جواباً ودخل داره وقال لاحاجة لي بالصلوة قال فقام المنهال بن عمر الى على بن الحسين فقال له كيف أصبحت يا بن رسول الله فقال له الامام كيف حال من اصبح وقد قتل ابوه وقل ناصره وينظر الى حرم من حوله اسارى قد فقدوا السر والغطاء وقد اعدمو الكافل والحمى فهل ترانى الا اسيراً ذليلاً قد عدمت الناصر والكفيل قد كسيت انا واهل بيتى ثياب الأسى وقد حرم علينا جديد العرى فان تسئل فيها انا كما ترى قد شمتت فينا الأعداء ونترقب الموت صباحاً ومساءً ثم قال قد اصبحت العرب تنفخر على العجم بان محمداً منهم واصبحت قريش تفتخر على سائر العرب بان محمداً منهم ونحن اهل بيته اصبحنا مقتولين مظلومين قد حلت بنا الرزايا نساق سبايا ونجلب هدايا كأنّ حسبنا من اسقط الحسب ومنسبنا من ارذل النسب كأنّ لم نكن على هام المجد رقيقنا وعلى بساط الجليل سعيننا واصبح الملك ليزيد وجنوده واضحت بنوا المصطفى (ص) من ادنى عبيده قال فعلت الأصوات من كل جانب بالبكاء والنحيب قال فخشي يزيد الفتنة وقال للذى اصعده المنبر وبحك اردت بصعوده زوال ملكي فقال والله ما علمت ان هذا الغلام يتكلم بمثل هذا الكلام فقال له يزيد ما علمت ان هذا من اهل بيت النبوة ومعدن الرسالة فقال له المؤذن اذا كان كذلك فلم قتل اباه فامر بضرب عنقه قال فكان اهل الشام نيام فانتبهوا فغطلوا الاسواق وجددوا العزاء واظهروا المصيبة لاهل العباء وقالوا والله ما علمنا انه راس الحسين واما قيل راس خارجي خرج بارض العراق فلما سمع يزيد ذلك استعمل لهم اجزاء القران وفرقها في المسجد فكانوا اذا فرغوا من الصلوة وضعوها بين ايديهم ليشغلوا بها عن ذكر الحسين فلم يشغلهم عن ذكره شئ قال فامر يزيد باحضارهم وقام خطيباً وقال يا اهل الشام انتم تقولون اني قتل الحسين او امرت بقتله واما قتل ابن مرجانه ثم دعي بالذين حضروا قتل الحسين فحضروا بين يديه فسئلهم وقال وبحكم من قتل الحسين فجعل بعضهم يحيل على بعض فقال يزيد وبحكم اراكم يحيله بعضكم على بعض قالوا يا يزيد قتله قيس بن الربيع فقال له انت قتل الحسين فقال كلاماً انا قتلته قال فمن قتله قال قيس اقول لك من قتله ولي الامان قال قل ولك الامان قال قيس

والله ما قتل الحسين واهل بيته الا من عقد الرايات وصب المال على الانطاع وسير الجيوش فقال يزيد و من ذاك قال انت والله يا يزيد قال فغضب يزيد ونهض ودخل داره ووضع الراس في طشت وغطاه بمندبل ديبقى ووضعه في حجره وجعل يلطم على خده و يقول مالى وقتل الحسين الخ

The Sermon of Ali at Damascus.

Says Abi Mikhnaf: "Yazid ordered a man to ascend the pulpit and abuse Husain. The man carried out the order. Ali, son of Husain, the only surviving son, said to that man, "By God if you allow me to ascend the pulpit and talk, so that, Allah and His Apostle may be pleased." That man said to him:—"Ascend and say what you desire." So the Imam Ali ascended the pulpit and talked in the spirit of prophets most eloquently so that the people round about him had assembled. He said:—"O people! he who has known me, known me, and as for he who did not know me, I acquaint him with myself. I am Ali, son of Husain, son of Ali, son of Abi Talib. I am the son of that personality who performed Haj,

سعي , performed Tawaf (circle) round the House of Allah and made **تيك** (running) in the prescribed Holy place. I am the son of Zamzam (a famous well of Mecca) and Safa, a prescribed course. I am the son of Fatimah Az-Zahra. I am the son of the one whose gullet had been cut off from behind. I am the son of the one thirsty till death. I am the son of one who had been compelled not to take water, on the contrary allowed the water to all except him. I am the son of Mohammad Mustafa—the Holy Prophet. (On whom be Allah's peace). I am the son of the martyr of Karbala. I am the son whose helpers were buried under ground. I am the son of one whose female relations were made captives. I am the son of the one whose children were killed without fault. I am the son of the one whose tents, the enemies burnt. I am the son of the one who was laid unconscious in the plain. I am the son of the one who had no coffin nor obsequies. I am the son whose head was raised on spear. I am the son of whose household people were disgraced at Karbala. I am the son of him whose body is at one place and the head at another. I am the son of the one who had been surrounded by enemies all round. I am the son of the one whose women were dragged to Syria for presentation there. I am the son of the one who had no helper nor assistant." Then he exclaimed (Allah's blessings ever be upon him) thus:—"O people! Surely God made us excellent with five things. The abode of angels and the sources of apostleship is our house. To us, the revelation had come, and we guided the world (people) for thorough guidance; we are the possessors of valour and boldness. We have the righteousness for the straight path, and knowledge for one who wishes to learn and the love. Only the true believers will love us. We have the exalted position in the earth and the sky. And had it not been for us, God would have never created the world. And every pride except for us, is to winds. One who loves us shall be given the water of Kausar. And as for one who hates us, he will be punished severely on the Day of Judgment." Abi Mikhnaf relates that when the people had heard this stirring speech of the grandson of the Prophet of Islam, they roared out with bitter cry and weeping; voices were raised high. Yazid, seeing this, became afraid of a tumult. So he asked the Moazzin to interrupt the Khutba or speech. Then the Moazzin ascended the pulpit and cried:—"Allaho Akbar." The Imam answered:—"Thou has said the

اشهدان لا اله الا الله "Ash Hado An La Ilaha Illal Lah" Truth." Then the Moazzin said,

The Imam said, "I bear witness to that there is no Deity except Allah." The

Meazzin further cried **اشهد ان محمد رسول الله** viz., "I bear witness that Mohammad is the Apostle of Allah." This made Ali weep and asked Yazid "Tell me by God, was Mohammad my grandfather or yours?" Yazid replied, "Yours." Then Ali said to him, "Then why did you kill his inmates (his relatives)?" To this Yazid did not reply. Then Yazid entered his room and said, "There is no need for me to pray." It is said that there rose up Minhal Bin Sahal and addressing Ali, son of Husain, said:—"How do you do, O the son of the Apostle of Allah?" To this the Imam replied:—"What would be the state of the one whose father had been killed and his helpers became few and would look to his female relations round him captives. Surely they lost covering. Do you see me but a captive and a helpless? Helpers and defenders are exhausted. Surely

I and my **اهل البيت** viz., the people of my house wore dress of despair and surely they forbade for us clothings. Then if thou asketh about me, I am, as you find me now, surely the enemies taunted us and we expect death every eve and morn." Then he said:—"Verily Arabs thought superiority over the non-Arabs, for Mohammad was one of them, and we the people of his house have been killed and oppressed. Grief and desperation have overtaken us and we are carried like captives, so much so, as if to offer ourselves as presents to others, as if we are the most trodden men and our lineage is the most base, or that as if we had never been on the zenith of glory." "The state turned out to be that of Yazid and his soldiers and the progeny of Mustafa (Prophet) became (so to say) his slaves."

It is said that here the voices were raised high from all the corners with weeping and crying. It is also said that Yazid feared the situation and said to that man whom Yazid had asked to ascend the pulpit:—"Woe to you, you wanted the fall of my kingdom by ascending the 'Mumber' (pulpit)". He said:—"By God, I did not know that this lad would speak in such a way." So to him Yazid said:—"Did you not know that he is from the house of the Prophet?" Then the Moazzin spoke to him thus:—"If it is so then why did you kill his father?" Yazid hearing this ordered him to be beheaded. It is said that at this juncture, so to say, the people of Syria were slumbering and here that they woke up. They at once closed down their markets, held lamenting meetings and expressed their grief for the People of the House and said:—"By Allah, we did not know that it was the head of Husain, but it was said 'head of a rebel who rebelled in Iraq'." So when Yazid heard this, he ordered loose sheets of the Quran to be spread in the mosque in order to get them engaged, and to persuade them not to think of Husain. The result was that the people used to collect them after the prayers. But nothing could engage them from remembering Husain. It is said that Yazid ordered them to be presented before him. He rose and said:—"O the people of Syria! You say that I killed Husain and that I ordered his killing, but I say it was Ibn Marjana (Shimar) who killed him. Then he asked those who were present at the martyrdom of Husain. He asked them:—"Woe to you, who killed Husain?" Some of them began putting the blame upon others. Yazid said:—"Woe to you; I see some of you blaming others." They replied:—"It was Qais Bin Rabia who killed him." Yazid asked him, "Did you Kill Husain?" Qais said, "Pardon me if I reveal the assassin." Yazid said, "Say, I shall pardon you." Qais said, "By God, nobody has killed Husain and his kin but he who ordered banners to be unfurled and poured wealth and ordered the march of army." Yazid asked him, "Who was he?" He replied, "Yourself, by God, O Yazid." It is said that Yazid became mad with anger, rose, entered his room, put the head in a vessel and covered it with a silken kerchief. He then placed the vessel in his lap and began beating his cheeks and said: "Why have I killed Husain?"

ANNIVERSARY OF IMAM HUSAIN.

The Occasions on which the Holy Prophet wept.

Throughout the world in general, and Iraq, Iran (Persia) and India in particular, there are meetings held every year for ten days or more, commencing from first of Moharram to the 10th in token of the mighty Husain. Preachers and lecturers repeat the events and episodes that happened in Karbala and speak on the martyrdom thus reminding the Moslem the heroic deeds Husain underwent. These meetings are called by various names, the popular names are Majliss (pl. Majalis) and Rozakhani.

The audience hearing the tremendous suffering of the grandson of the Holy Prophet Mohammad weep and cry and some of them become so much uncontrollable in their emotions that they faint; others beat their heads and chest due to profound sorrow and grief, though beating heads or chest is prohibited by the Prophet. But who can deny that weeping for Husain is un-natural? I site below a few instances when the Prophet himself did weep and cry on many occasions, which is quite natural.

The Holy Prophet wept on the death of Osman bin Muzoon with such abundance that a stream of tears flowed out from his eyes. (Mishkat Vol: 2, P. 195, Lahore).

Mohammad wept on the death of his son Ibrahim, (Mishkat Vol. 2, p. 281, Isteeb p. 738, and Bukhari Vol 1, p. 145). He kissed the face of Ibrahim at the time of his death, and tears flowed from his eyes. (Bukhari p. 675).

When the Prophet heard the women of Ansar crying over their dead in the battle-field of Uhad, he said that there was no one to weep over the body of Hamza, his uncle, and cried and mourned for Hamza. When these women heard of this, they all joined and cried and mourned for Hamza. The Prophet was so much affected by this, that he said, "With you, and with your descendants God will be pleased, for you sympathised with me." (Sirut Vol. 2, p. 254, and Musnad Ahmed Bin Humbel Vol 3 p. 40). When the Holy Prophet saw Hamza wounded he wept and when he saw him hopeless he cried out. (Isteeab, p. 40, and Madarij-e-Nabuwat p. 575). He cried when Saffia cried, and lamented when she lamented. (Shara Nahj-el-Balaga el Jadid, Egypt).

After the Martyrdom of Jaffar the Holy Prophet Muhammad went to his house for condolence with eyes full of tears, and when he reached the house he wept so bitterly that his beard was all smeared with tears. (Sirut-el-Hulbia Vol. 3, p. 689.)

When he visited the tomb of Amina, his mother, he wept so much and so bitterly that he made the others about him weep as well. (Mishkat-Muslim).

The Prophet wept profoundly on Jafar. (Bukhari-Kitab el Khaibaz, p. 3). He always cried when any body in the family died (Bukhari, p. 146.)

Sa'ad fell ill and the Holy Prophet with disciples and others went to see him, and when he found him in coma, tears came down from his eyes. (Bukhari & Muslim).

Reference can be made to the following four more events of this nature, Vafa-el-Vafaj, Vol 2, p. 36; Bahe-jet-el-Mahfil, p. 564; Aswa-i-Shabi, Vol: 1, p. 191. Kitab-l-Mugazil-el-Vafidee; Futooheel-Sham, p. 108; and Tarikh-e-Khamees, p. 406.

Um-el-Fazal Bint-e-Haris says that one day she took Husain to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who started crying as soon as he saw him, and said,

Muhammad's tears in his life on the martyrdom of Husain.

"Gabrael had brought me the news of the martyrdom of Husain at the hands of those of my followers who have turned traitors." (Miskhat). Vol. 2 p. 193, Lahore, "Gabrael had also brought the sand from the field of Karbala and had made the Prophet smell it, and Muhammad wept bitterly over it." (Musnad Ahmed bin Humbal, and Guniyat-ul-talibeen pages 61 & 62, Egypt).

Ibn Abbas says that in his dream he saw the Prophet covered with dust standing with a phial in his hand, and asked him why such a miserable condition,

Muhammad's tears after the Martyrdom of Husain.

and that the Prophet replied he had just come from Karbala where Husain and his followers were martyred, and that the phial in his hand had the blood of the martyrs in it. (Musnad Ibn Humbal).

Even after his death, the Prophet had been seen lamenting and crying, and throwing dust over his body on the sorrow of Husain (Tarikh-el-Khulafa p. 145). Then Umm-e-Sulma saw Prophet in her dream weeping she asked him the reason and the Holy Prophet replied, "I am weeping because they have just martyred Husain." (Isaf-er-Raghebeen p. 191, and Sawaeq, p. 454).

The above quotations of authoritative reports prove amply that weeping is quite natural and congenial. I write this because there are so-called orthodox Muslims who call themselves puritans and who allege that there should be no weeping for Husain. I am at a great loss to understand their psychology in prohibiting one from this natural and sympathetic duty. Can they control their sympathy (weeping) at the most helpless and hopeless scenes? This is my direct challenge to them. If not and indeed not, then how can they accuse one weeping and exposing sorrow and grief for the greatest world martyr? To such heartless and conscienceless men I cite the following famous Urdu lines by Hakim Syed Mohammad Mohsin Saheb Rizwi, Sadarul Afazil, the famous poet of Azamgadh (U. P. India) and the Editor of Pratap Daily (Poetry portion) of Lahore, Punjab, India:—

مصطفیٰ سی دوستی شبیر سی بغض و حسد

احمد مرسل سی الفت اور نواسی سی یہ کدا

دعویٰ ایمان بھی ایمان سی انکار بھی

دوستی کی دوستی آزار کا آزار بھی

اک زمانہ رو رہا ہی مجھ پہ کیوں بیداد ہی

ہی دھاتی عقل کی انصاف سی فریاد ہی

باعث بدعت جو آنسو تھا تو کیوں پیدا کیا

معتز ہنسے ہنسے ہین ای معبود تونی کیا کیا

حضرت یعقوب یوسف کیلئی تھی اشکبار
 خود رسول اللہ تھی سرور کی غم میں اشکبار
 خلقتاً اندھا جو ہو روئسی اسکو کام کیا
 اسکی آگے سب برابر صبح کیا اور شام کیا
 روشنی میں حق کی چل تاریک بستی چھوڑ دی
 کام لی انصاف سی باطل بستی چھوڑ دی
 چاہئی روئیکو دل اور دل کو رونا چاہئی
 آج محسن دامن عصیان کو دھونا چاہئی

AUTHOR'S GRATITUDE.

In publishing and printing this book, I have to undergo a great hardship for collecting donations and subscriptions. It is not a new thing. Good and substantial works are always hard to inaugurate. Such works as this book shall be ever remaining in this transitory world. Although there are wealthy and well-to-do Muslims, here in Bombay alone, not one or two, but hundreds and thousands, yet I had to go and approach nearly all of them to manage for a few hundred rupees to pay to the Printer. Such useful and ever lasting works as this book is, can be printed by a single wealthy Muslim, as it was a question of not thousands or lakhs of rupees but of a few hundreds of rupees only.

Those shrewd Muslim who denied help in publishing this first and the foremost life of Imam Husain, the grandson of the Holy Prophet of Islam, should think and ponder calmly as to how far they were justified in refusing help for this book. Husain lived and died for Islam and has set the best example for the Muslim. I leave their refusal and denying help, to Imam Husain and the Prophet Mohammad.

On the other hand, there were few selfless and worthy sons of Islam who have contributed their donations for enabling me to publish and print this book. The first and foremost amongst those who tops the list, Mr. Adam F. J. Lalji, has not only contributed his donation but requested others too to participate in this Noble Cause. Allah alone will reward him. I am grateful to all those gentlemen who have donated towards the publication of the book, enabling me to complete it. "By no means shall you attain righteousness until you spend benevolently out of what you love; and whatever thing you spend, (in Allah's Cause), Allah surely knows it." Al-Quran : III, 133.

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